

I have attempted here to think of an appropriate description of the sound that the stapler made. I have failed. The closest I can come is a “ka chunk grrr swoosh ping.” Needless to say, it made an unusual noise. Three of these noises and one box was completed. Shirley begrudgingly grabbed another piece of cardboard to shape into another box by folding it along the appropriate fold marks and placed it over the staple arm as she had before.

She had not been mad at me yet today, beyond the usual not wanting to work type mad. She was even working with some measure of concentration. She was quiet and her production rate was higher than her average. She had completed 117 boxes in less than three hours. I praised her and pointed out that she could buy the baby a new outfit. She growled in response and I went on.

As I made my rounds in the work area checking on each person and counting their production, I noticed that it had been a quiet morning for the entire group. This particular work required focus and I was proud of the effort everyone was putting in to finish this job.

I was really glad of the quiet for me, too. I rarely ran late in the morning, but today I had gotten up later than usual, thrown an egg sandwich in a plastic bag, and run. I hit a drive-thru for a Dr. Pepper and still made it to work on time, but I just wasn't quite with it yet.

The euphoric quiet was broken when I heard Ralph Hollowell scream. I knew who it was immediately and what was going on. Ralph was cursing with every four-letter word he could lay his tongue to. He was cursing as fast as he could talk and his usual lower baritone voice was a high-pitched tenor monotone that had a nasal quality, he was having a seizure.

Ralph's seizures were petite mal seizures and not the grand mal convulsions on the floor most people think of when they think of seizures. Ralph did not lose consciousness and was aware afterwards that he had experienced a seizure. His body

would become rigid and he could become combative. He was usually sleepy afterwards and on rare occasions lost bladder control. People often got hurt during one of Ralph's seizures.

He was standing between some skids loaded with nut and bolt supplies for an assembly job in Lil' LeRoy's work area # 1, to the right of my area and divided by a small counter near the break room.

I reached him first because Lil' LeRoy was outside. I was afraid that he might throw one of the bolts before I got to him. I talked to him gently and asked him to hold my hands. I assured him that I would hold on with him until the seizure was over. He gratefully grabbed my hands and squeezed. He couldn't hit me if I had his hands. He cursed for about 20 seconds more and then it was over. Other supervisors who had come running from their areas returned to their clients. Ralph thanked me and went back to his area. I returned to mine, as well.

That is when I heard Shirley scream. As I ran toward her, I could see her hand was in the stapler. I reached her about the time she took her foot off the pedal that engaged the "ka chunk grrr swoosh ping" noise and I saw her severed finger fly up. Blood squirted and Shirley froze. I grabbed the napkin from my breakfast sandwich off my desk, and grabbed the stub of her finger, and plugged the bleeding as best I could.

"You'll be okay, Shirley, I've got you and nothing else can happen now," I assured her. "I'll get you to the doctor."

Chuck Norris reached me first. No, not the Chuck Norris of television fame, but a coworker who became a friend and an adopted brother of mine. I usually just called him the leprechaun because he was short and stocky and feisty. He was the truck driver at the workshop and just happened to walk in the back door. He didn't quite know what was happening, but he was always game for anything.

"The finger is over here," I said and nodded with my head in the direction it had gone. He found it quickly. "Put it in the plastic bag off my desk with some ice off my

drink," I told him. By then Jay and Shari were handing me paper towels to add to my blood soaked napkin and said the (on-duty-physician) OD was over on the ward. "Tell him to stay there and get ready," I said remembering how long it took him to come to the workshop last time. "I'll bring her."

Chuck shoved the plastic bag containing the finger into my shirt's breast pocket with a bashful, "sorry," when he touched me accidentally. We jumped into my truck and I drove as fast as I dared in first gear the two blocks to the Evans Building.

The OD met us at the door and took Shirley and her finger. I gladly left her in his hands and drove back to the workshop thankful that it was almost lunch time. I needed to sit down a while! I cleaned up my truck, cleaned myself, and tried to slow the adrenaline. Times like that I wished I was still drinking,

'Dem Bones

In the workshop we tried to give a little incentive occasionally that was comparable to what most working people experience. We would plan a day for a small group to eat out after an especially good payday. On one such excursion we went to a place that had pizza, broasted chicken, potato wedges, cold slaw, unending soda refills and a very discounted price because my aunt owned the place. She added free candy bars for dessert and let me bring even those clients who were not deemed socially appropriate.

Marshal Hogan was a very tall, thin man, about 30, with milk chocolate-colored skin, smooth features (including his naturally bald head), and beautifully expressive brown eyes. He was usually a good-natured man, soft spoken, and sang gospel songs in his mother's church most Sundays. Sometimes he would softly sing a verse or two of the old hymn, "Precious Memories," while we worked. But Marshal never stayed soft too long ,he'd get excited.

As he put it, "The Spirit takes over and there's just no stoppin'!" At times his singing sounded like what he called, "a back woods-Mississippi-go-to-meetin' rally."

Then we'd all be in trouble. The boss objected to people having too much fun on the job.

We had been sure to tell Marshal there would be no singing at lunch because we were out in the community to eat. We assured him that most people in the community didn't find singing an acceptable behavior in public unless you were in a stage show.

All the patients looked forward to getting off the hospital grounds. Today there would be no institutional chicken that tasted like it had been sprayed with Raid; no tough roast beef, dubbed as gross beast, no dreaded hamloaf surprise or liver.

There were 15 of us on this trip so it took a while to get everyone's passes, into staff vehicles, then to the restaurant, seated and served with a drink and the right orders. When this was finally accomplished, I canvassed the room for those that had inhaled their food and began the reloading process of getting them back into the truck before they could start a fight over their table neighbor's still half-full plates.

Marshal ate very slowly. From watching him, I believe he genuinely savored every bite, morsel, and crumb right down to the slick smears he licked from his fingers. This being the case, Marshal was obviously going to be one of the last back in my truck to go back to the hospital.

I resigned myself to the wait, helped clear the tables, and continued the reloading process with those who had finished eating. We were ready to go except for the inevitable stragglers. Marshal and two other clients were the last to leave, they said their thank yous and good-byes to Aunt Mary, my cousins Phyllis and Norma and Phyllis' daughter Kim. As I cleared Marshal's table, panic ran through me.

There were no picked-clean bones in his empty chicken box like the other clients' boxes had. I looked under his table and on the floor. I looked on the windowsill. I checked the other plates at the table for extra bones. I was determined not to have to check his pockets if I could help it! I went to him and asked as quietly as possible, so as not to involve other customers, how he liked his fried chicken. He smiled brightly in the affirmative. I pressed on and asked where the bones were from his chicken. His face

went into an almost fluid motion of delight.

Tears formed; he sighed and began to hum to find his musical pitch. He suddenly dropped to his knees and raised his hands, palms up. He offered up praise to heaven in an extremely loud and crystal clear voice. This was done right in front of the cashier's counter where my aunt stood riveted in place with fear and surprise, her mouth wide open and her face getting redder by the second.

Marshal then proceeded loudly and exuberantly to incorrectly quote scripture concerning the "bones of my bones" passage out of context and prayed to thank God for my Aunt Mary's chicken -bones and all! I half expected him to burst out singing "'Dem Bones, 'Dem Bones."

Once I was sure he was not in physical distress and had not punctured his throat on a chicken bone sliver, I got him out of there as quickly as I could. Back on the ward, I reported the incident to the on-duty physician.

My Aunt Mary's chicken has never been quite the same since then, and just pay no attention if I begin to hum "Precious Memories" as I eat.

Melvin Marshall

Melvin was one of the vulnerable ones. He was tall, gangly, limp shouldered -an awkward-moving man in his early 20s. He had a friendly, albeit uneven smile of small jagged teeth and a voice like a child's who didn't get his way.

His hair was a thin, almost white-blonde, and grew down his neck under his collar. He could never get a haircut often enough to stop it from doing so and it gave him a ragged look like he always needed to clean up.

The evening was cooling with the bright sun finally fading. The day had been a scorcher and the heat hung in the air. The clients with grounds privileges could leave the ward and used their free time after dinner to wander the hospital grounds for a specified time before meds were due. The air was heavy with humidity and most of the men were in T-shirts. The lightening bugs were coming out in force, blinking on and off so fast you couldn't count them. They seemed to hover about a foot above the tallest blade of mown grass and created a glowing mist effect in the dimming light.

A group of clients from a mixture of units sat talking at the grove area picnic tables. Lil' Leroy and I were walking through the grove returning to the workshop from the Evans building after escorting a combative Willie Wildman back to the ward. Lil' Leroy was a very large black man who worked as a floor supervisor like myself but in the area next to mine. The name came with him when he was hired and is not my fault.

We were glad to turn Willie over to ward staff and walked back slowly, enjoying the grove's peaceful feeling. The air was scented with an odd mixture of honeysuckle and cheeseburgers from a Burger Chef across the street. The birds sang their last chirps of the day as the cars in the distance made their usual din of background growls as people gratefully went home at the end of the day. We had two hours to go before we could follow suit.

We spotted Melvin with a group of clients he didn't usually hang out with and stopped to watch with a sense of foreboding. Things didn't feel right.

The alcoholic unit was housed in the Evans building then. Anyone who has ever worked a drug rehab center, an institution, or a prison knows that you can get any contraband you want in these places for the right price. A guy like Melvin was an easy

target for a bunch of good old boys from bars all across town. Poor Melvin was trying to keep up with the other guys' bravado and bragging how he used to be such a big drinking man. He had no idea how he was setting himself up.

They blew him off at first and then began making a game of him. Four young men were particularly attentive and patronizing. Eventually the teasing came down to a dare. From our vantage point Lil' LeRoy and I couldn't hear what the dare was exactly. We watched without interfering as the group began to spread out and everyone began collecting lightening bugs. Melvin had a whole handful of them. They were crawling up his arm and dropping off the sides of his hands; and we watched their lights dim as they dropped off into the grass. I could hear his giggling as he lunged after another one. Melvin was enjoying himself immensely and I began to relax a little.

He continued to giggle then ran back and forth to the picnic table with his hands containing more of the luminescent insects. I could tell he was proud of himself and he turned his back to us as he got to the table and sat down satisfied with his evening's catch. Everyone else stopped what they were doing and joined Melvin at the table, too.

Suddenly, Lil' Leroy jumped up from our bench and ran toward the picnic table. I didn't exactly know why, but I was on his heels ready for whatever we were getting into. I'm not sure I wasn't addicted to the adrenaline rushes of those days. As I approached, Melvin turned a little and I could see why he was eating the lightening bugs and washing them down with a can of beer.

The light had begun to get dimmer and I hadn't seen his actions as fast as Lil' Leroy. Now I could see him only too clearly. I saw him even better when he smiled because his lips and teeth were aglow. His hands and the palm prints on the beer can

glowed. It didn't take a genius to figure out what the bet was now and that Melvin was the brunt of the joke one more time.

Evans Building Photo CSH Annual Report



Bolton Building



Photo: Vickie Cole, 2001

Chapter 10

Historically... "Descriptions of depression and mania are found ... in medical treatises, biography and literature. Hippocrates described meloncholia or severe depression in the 5th century B.C. Aretaeus of Cappadocia noted the association between melancholia and mania in the second century. Nineteenth century psychiatrists used the terms melancholia and mania, although not always in the form they are used today. ... a German psychiatrist, Emil Kraepelin, conducted long term follow-up studies of hospitalized patients." It is now known as Bipolar Disorder. Lucy Jane King, *Traces*, Spring 2001, pg 9.

Evon Washington

Evon was new to the workshop. Average in girth and a little on the short side at only five foot four inches tall, he had dark chocolate skin that shimmered almost blue black in bright lights. Evon was not an exceptionally remarkable-looking man in appearance; he could have lowered his head and disappeared into any crowd in a big city. He was in his early 20s with the youthful and muscular build of many well-developed young men his age. He had bright, piercing dark eyes and a very creative sense of humor. Evon was also deaf and could only make minor noises with his voice.

The deafness did not seem to be much of a hindrance because Evon was quiet and easygoing, and had a nice smile. He was not a demanding man; he was patient even with my slow signing. He laughed indulgently and teased me mercilessly, but in a good-spirited manner as I messed up signs. Those vibrant eyes and quiet manner were very endearing.

One of his favorite activities at break time was to teach me a new sign language vocabulary of slang words or unusual signs; some could even be done in polite company. Other signs helped me recognize when a deaf client was getting upset and cursing me with hands flying and a phony smile on the face. This was usually done by the women.

Men were usually more up front when they were mad. This is a sexist outlook I am sure but it was one I found to be true.

The whole group laughed one day and we disrupted work in the workshop when he taught me the sign for corn. Using both hand index fingers, the sign resembled two rabbit ears with one scratching the other. It reminded me of doing finger shadows of animals on the wall with a flashlight when I was a kid. He had everybody in the group doing it. We looked like a finger puppet rabbit convention.

Evon was very polite and was always appreciative of my help on his work assignments. He was a really fast worker and one of the more productive and quality employees. He would have fit in at any factory. His hand-eye coordination and dexterity skills were better than mine were any day of the week, and his energy and confidence showed no outward sign of a mental illness.

Initially Evon was on a lock-up ward most of the time. He was new so I hadn't gotten information on him yet, but I knew he had to be court committed for acts of violence because he was in my group. I hadn't had any other kind of client for several years.

One Monday, Evon didn't come for work. Since he had been so regular that was out of the ordinary. When I called the ward they said he was at the hospital for tests. I didn't think much about it until several others from his ward and some clients in other wards were also being sent for *tests*. There was no hospital scuttlebutt yet so whatever the problem it was recent and required the "meatwagon" (hospital ambulance) to transport the clients. That meant the situation was too bad to be handled by the hospital staff alone.

The grapevine bustled with possibilities as always until factual information began to filter down. Fact one was that Evon was in the prison ward and not in the emergency room. Fact two was that everyone else sent to the hospital was female. Fact three, there was a whole notebook of labs ordered on everyone.

At the end of several days of speculation and hospital rumors, everything boiled down to the fact that Evon had been locked up at Bahr Center in the Maximum Security Unit because he had been routinely raping the girls on the deaf unit and threatening them if they told.

There was no evil nature about Evon. He was likable and very nice unless he was raping someone. Uncontrollable urges took over at times, he said. Unfortunately, that is all we ever learned about him except that he was sent to prison again and killed in the first two days.

I would never understand God's plan, but a hint every now and then would have been nice. When I got like this, I was burnt out, in need a break; I needed to just breathe.

Catfish Recipe

In my 30s and 40s, I was really hooked on fishing. I was catching some big fish, and enthusiastically telling even bigger fish stories. After work I would be found with a quick sandwich supper in one hand and my Shakespeare rod and reel in the other. I would fish until dark about every warm evening with at least one of the five kids at home tagging along for some one-on-one quality time. I had and still have a habit of keeping

my fishing gear in the car freshly oiled and ready to go, and even fished through my lunch hour many days.

On this particular day, I had been involved in helping to throw a party at work, and due to schedule changes, I was unexpectedly rewarded with a two-hour lunch break before clients arrived again. My preteen boys were with me assisting with serving the party refreshments. I didn't have to ask the boys if they wanted to go fishing. I just looked at them and smiled and they both knew where we were headed.

There was also a summer student in my group named Karen. She was not quite as young as the usual student we had in the workshop. She was maybe 30, but looked younger. She was an athletic type with an auburn cast in her dark hair. She had a red head in her family somewhere I would bet. There were faint freckles on her arms and both cheeks beside her nose that she tried to hide. She had a couple of kids of her own, girls.

She saw me give the boys a smile to let them know we were on for fishing and picked up on the signal. She ended up going with us. I am not quite sure why because she had never been fishing. Bored was my guess.

I drove to my favorite spot on the White River just below the small dam on the Parkway, just across from the old baseball diamonds at Victory Field. When we got out of the car we each grabbed a pole that I had rigged with a crappie jig or small spinner bait. I figured I would start Karen off downstream away from us *expert fishermen* until she learned to cast. I had taught newcomers before. I didn't want her to scare all the fish away beating the water with the end of her pole or bobber in unsuccessful efforts.

As we walked down the bank from the car I could see that my favorite spot was taken. There was an elderly black man there. He turned and saw us about the

same time. He motioned for us to come on down the bank, yelling that he would be leaving. Could be a good sign, our lucky day.

He was in his 70s I guessed, and bent slightly with his years. A distinguished gray was mixed in his black curly hair. He reached down to the log he had been sitting on and retrieved a jacket too warm for the present temperatures. I figured he had been there since early morning when the chill was still on.

He was very slowly gathering his gear. I grew increasingly impatient. I did not want to waste a minute of the extra time I had been allotted. How dare he be in my spot anyway?

I offered to help take his gear up the bank when I saw it was going to take longer than I wanted. I was not being noble, just selfish. He seemed very feeble and I wasn't so sure he would be able to get up there himself. The more I saw of his face the more frail he looked; my guilt mounted. The old man began a conversation as he gathered things together. He said he fished here often to help feed himself and his son's family.

"Aren't you afraid to eat the fish from White River?" I asked. "The department of health told me they were unsafe to eat because of PCBs."

He just smiled a crooked smile with big lips over straight white teeth and said, "It ain't killed me yet so I don't figure it's gonna. I've lived a long time anyway."

He handed me his tackle box and poles and I was beginning to wonder what he intended to carry. I stood there juggling my load and watched as he pulled a pair of gloves out of his pocket in what seemed like slow motion. They were the yellow kind that were very thick and had lamb's wool inside. He pulled them on one hand and then the

other, methodically. When he reached toward the water's edge my eyes followed and I spotted the stringer chain.

It was an old-fashioned metal stringer like the one I have of my grandfather's. This one had a bright blue nylon rope tied to it to allow it to have extra length in the water. As he pulled it in, all I could do was stand with my mouth gaped open and stare.

He had three fish. It took great effort for the old man to pull them in. All three were Buffalo Carp. They were as big around as the top of my leg. I had my 8-year-old son, Chris, lay down next to them. Only one fish was shorter than him, and not by much. Even the boys could not do anything but stare. Karen looked in shock and took a couple steps back. The old man acted as if this were his normal everyday catch and handed me a cottage cheese container.

In the container was the balance of his homemade dough bait and he began to tell me how he made it. That recipe is engraved in my memory for life. I continued to stand and marvel at the size of the fish flopping on the ground as he began to wrap the blue cord around his gloved hand.

As he was dragging them up the bank he told me how to clean them without rupturing the mud vein Carp have near their spine and how to cook them in salt water in a pressure cooker to soften the bones. I was a sponge, soaking up every word.

By the time we reached his truck blood was oozing up out of the gloves and onto the blue cord. If he noticed, he ignored it and I said nothing. I helped him hoist his catch into his old pick up truck and he wished me luck fishing adding to be careful of the little ones near the river's edge.

I stood there watching, still in a daze as he drove off. Suddenly, John yelled, "Hey

Mom, I think I got one!”

The reality of his final words struck and I realized that Karen and my small sons were down at the water’s edge fishing with that magic dough bait. I ran down the bank as fast as I could, praying hard that none of them would get a bite from one of those Buffalo Carp. I feared it would pull one of my sons in the water. I knew that I could not swim. Thankfully, my prayers were answered and we returned to work empty handed.

The next fishing trip there I brought securing ropes and cast without fear.

Water Tower

The volume of work we had made for a very busy day. The morning was one of hustling materials on and off truck beds with the forklift and encouraging clients to work their fastest to get the work order completed and ready for shipment before the 4th of July holiday. They would make good money this week.

Everyone was in a rush. The downtown office wanted all billing turned in by the end of June for the fiscal year end accounting process. The truck drivers wanted to be done so they could enjoy a long weekend off the road. The clients wanted to have their weekend of carnival in the grove, and I wanted to get it done and get out of there myself!

The weather was heating up fiercely for this early in the summer. Finishing the job in this heat would be a miserable task. The workshop had no air conditioning like the wards had and I’d seen it stay in the 90s in there several days at a time with no break. Every window that would open was. A lot of windows were broken over the winter and

instead of costly glass repairs they were boarded up with plywood. Other windows had been painted shut many years ago. I never figured out why those didn't get broken.

We stopped for noon break and the clients went to their wards for lunch and meds and a respite from the heat. I'd brought in several washed Four-O-Nine Spray Cleaner and Fantastic Spray Cleaner bottles and filled them with water to cool off the clients, especially those with seizure conditions, but water could only do so much.

Still I knew I shouldn't complain; there were no seizures so far today. The morning had felt eight hours long instead of four. I quickly closed down the workstations and counted all the work completed by each client, checked it, documented it for payroll, and boxed it for shipping.

We had a variety of jobs in today. We had big, black "frog" bolts about 1 1/4 inches in diameter that needed corresponding size nuts screwed on each one and laid in a stack. I have no idea why they were called frog bolts or what they were used for, but if I had to guess it would have been for building frame construction. Some were about eight inches long and others went to over a foot.

They were heavy and greasy and the threads were sharp and required wearing gloves and heavy aprons to handle them without deep cuts. There were some telephone cords to clean, and we also had local Chrysler plant's foundry helmets to clean, change filters in, disinfect the parts near the breather apparatus, and reassemble for the next shift's use.

Everyone finally left for lunch and I heard the quiet echo of the lock click into place in the voided building as I locked the doors. As usual on hot days, I had brought my lunch. I'd watch everyone leave the building rushing off to get into a crowded air

conditioned room for 30 minutes so they could roast again when they had to come back to work. Those rapid changes in temperature bothered me more than staying hot. I went and washed my face, hands, and arms up to the elbows.

I conserved what energy I had. I let the water run but it never got cool. I gratefully sat at my desk and did nothing, but breathe for a minute. When I gained a little strength back I slipped off my shoes and slid my throbbing feet into a pan of water hidden under my desk. I slid a few ice cubes in and my sigh, like the doors locking, reverberated through the empty building I wet my legs to the knees and turned the fan toward me as much as I could. Feeling a little more human and a lot more cooled off, I pulled open my bottom desk drawer and removed my peanut butter sandwich.

I wasn't even a little surprised to see the plastic sandwich bag had a quarter inch hole in it. Henry had lived somewhere in or around my desk and work area for years. Henry was a little brown mouse that frequently shared my lunch and whose favorite food was French Fries. Even cheese couldn't top French Fries with this little fellow.

For years I had set every type of mousetrap, poison, and snare imaginable for this little rodent. A steady partner in my murderous efforts was Fishlips, the workshop cat who ingeniously caught moles, trapped bats, killed rats and field mice very efficiently, but not even Fishlips could catch Henry. The last year or so I just gave up and shared lunch with Henry occasionally. We ate our lunch quietly; I tore off where Henry had begun eating and gave him the share he had marked as his.

Eventually, I began to revitalize and gear up for the afternoon session of clients. Someone frantically beating on the locked back door broke my revelry in solitude. Before I was able to get my shoes on, the alarm signal in my brain kicked in. The knocks were

quick, loud, and desperate. Being alone I would not unlock the door without being in contact with someone on the phone as a precaution, but something was definitely wrong. I looked out the back door where the knocks originated and I grabbed the phone.

At the same time I heard the front door open; staff returning from their lunch breaks were coming back. It was okay to open the door. I recognized Cal. He was a pretty nice guy off the deaf unit. I could see his face pushed against the glass in the window. It was strained and full of panic. He was sweating large beads of perspiration on his face and parts of his shirt neckline were wet. His hair was wet around the edges and he was breathing hard. He looked as if he'd run a mile. I let him in and his hands became whirlwinds of words I couldn't keep up with.

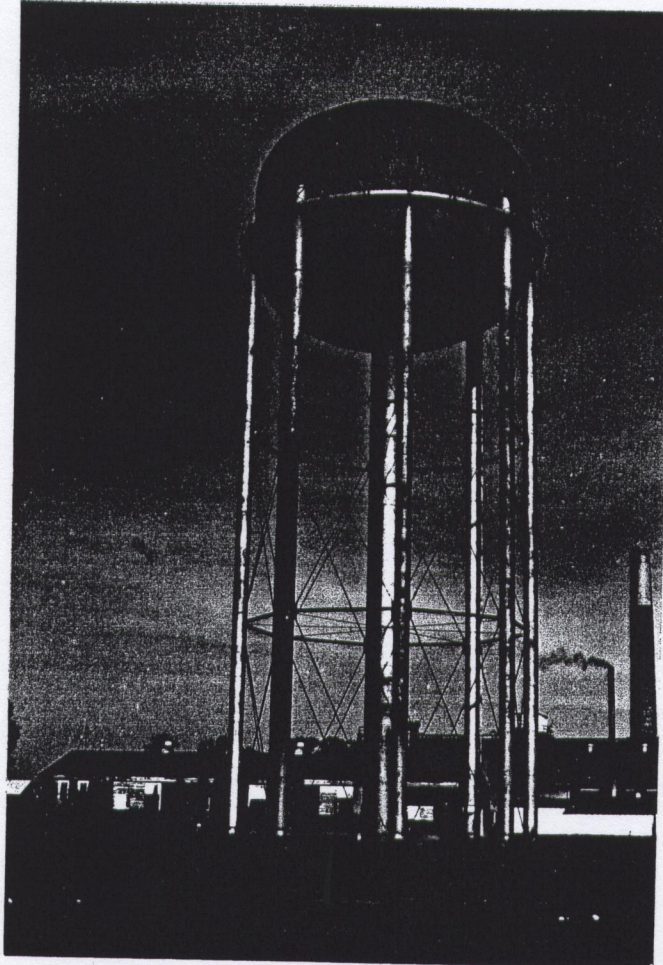
I was getting a word here and a word there as he kept repeating himself, but he was too overwrought to slow down. At first all I could get was the sign for "dead." He kept trying to fingerspell too fast for me so he gave up and attempted to describe with gestures. Eventually I got the words "climbing" and "blood." Cal kept pulling on my arm to go with him, but my group was coming in.

I asked my supervisor, Mr. Royce, for permission to go see what Cal was trying to tell me. I relayed all of the information I was getting quietly to him as I held Cal's shaking hands. My group of workers were coming in and beginning to wonder what was happening with Cal. Mr. Royce wanted me to calm Cal and take his story as just one of his more elaborate hallucinations. Now, I'd seen Cal during hallucinations and I knew how intense they could be, but this had an element that couldn't be ignored.

I wouldn't be ignored either, so Mr. Royce gave in and agreed to respond to Cal's pleas. He firmly said he would go and I could tend to my clients as they came in. I think

James C. Arnold

The Water Tower



Indiana Archives

Photos: Indiana Arcives, 2001

he thought I was trying to get out of the afternoon heat in the building. He didn't know I liked being in the sun even less. He could go stomping all over grounds all he liked in this heat; it was okay by me!

Neither of them came back that day but word filtered back to us that Cal had seen another client from the ward climb up the water tower and jump. The jumping client had splattered blood when he hit the concrete so Cal believed the client was dead. I had gotten most of the words right. I was thrilled that Mr. Royce went with Cal instead of me. Cal got some extra counseling sessions but his hallucinations increased anyway. Sometimes I still see him down by the bank by 71st St. and Michigan Road. signing amiably with the nearest light pole.

Bessie Stearns

Bessie was a tiny, fragile looking lady of about 40 with long black hair. She had a noticeable overbite, was a little round shouldered and hunched over, pitching to the right slightly as she walked. She had huge dark eyes and a sly look that matched her manipulating personality. I couldn't help but like her even though I knew I couldn't trust her even an inch. Bessie could steal anything that wasn't tied down and many things that were.

Bessie also had grand mal seizures. Her grand mal seizures manifested in a violent convulsion and loss of consciousness. She usually didn't lose bowel and kidney control like many clients did during seizures, but she would choke easily if not turned on her side. She exhibited no warning signals that a seizure was coming and would hurt herself convulsing if not protected.

Many said she had pseudo seizures mixed in with the real ones, but since I couldn't tell the difference I just treated each the same. I have learned that people who need attention so badly they will hurt themselves to get it will usually use an alternate way of telling you they need attention if you are willing to teach them one and respond to the cue. There is a big difference between wanting attention and really needing attention or anything else.

We were working at the usual workstations when the tornado warning sounded. From the look of the sky it was for real. Dark, heavy clouds swirled in every direction. The horizon had several peaks coming down that looked like they could become funnel clouds any minute. I grabbed my flashlight, my lunch, and my group of clients, and we ran for the exit of the wide-open building with the large skylight -the wrong place for a tornado. We ran for the basement of the building across the field.

Thunder boomed and lightening cracked as if the building had split in two. I was trapped in the basement of the administration building sitting in a fetal position with my knees embraced by my arms and waiting on the old building to crumble down on my head. I was in a cramped space with the air heavy with dampness and the smell of fear mixed with sweat.

Bessie sat next to me in the same position. I saw her shaking and made luke warm attempts to comfort her as we heard floorboards creak above our heads and small splinters and dust settled on us.

Before long I noticed that Bessie didn't seem scared anymore. She had relaxed her body and began to hum to herself. She rocked back and forth slowly. I couldn't figure out how to ask why she was okay. I was embarrassed that I was so scared and she wasn't.

I'd heard stories about the tornado that had come through Pruden and Fonde when my father's generation were kids in the Tennessee hills. I recalled the horror stories and was now scared out of my wits. Thinking was such a terrifically complicated process. I tried to concentrate on Bessie, but my visual images were of men in construction hats digging under this two-story building reduced to rubble to pull our mangled bodies out. I was beyond panic when I heard glass breaking somewhere and moved directly to horrified.

Bessie looked at me calmly. "Mama used to lock me in the coal bin room in the basement after I had a seizure," she said.

The wind howled upstairs and I couldn't find her point. "Mama was afraid of me when I had a fit. I was always so scared when she locked me in there at first, because it was so dark and I couldn't see if there was a snake there, a rat or a mole or what. I was afraid of every little noise," Bessie went on.

She paused to let her next words form in her mind. When she turned back to me she had that mischievous look in her eyes. She leaned toward me and hunched her shoulders as if to let me in on a secret before she continued.

"My sister used to sneak me food. Sometimes a cold chicken leg or a raw tater and a piece of bread. Mama thought if she fed me I'd throw up or choke or something. She said it was a way to keep me safe. My mama loves me and didn't want me to die." She grinned proudly and those dark eyes sparkled.

"How long did she keep you there?" I asked as my mind focused and I pictured her frail frame under the circumstances she described.

“Usually only overnight,” she replied, “but sometimes a day or two if I had more than one seizure. Sometimes I was pretty black from playing in the coal when I came out. She called me her little Buckwheat,” Bessie said with a laugh. Again the twinkle was in those scoundrel eyes.

We were interrupted about then by the all clear from the tornado warning. When Bessie got up she bumped into me and I had to steady the both of us to get out the door. Our legs hadn't gotten all the blood back into them yet.

I reached back down and got my flashlight before we left. I turned but Bessie was gone. Everyone was scrambling in every direction still. Some returned to work while others went back to the ward. Then I saw Bessie sitting in the grove leaned up against a tree. She was busy eating my banana she'd filched from my lunch sack..

Aliens In the Sky

There was a man in my group at the workshop that, although I would never admit to the extent of my fear, gave me pause to think of the damage he could inflict on my body.

I had the utmost respect for his very large size. He reminded me of the man in the film *The Green Mile* who played opposite Tom Hanks. He had been sent from Westfield Prison where he was said to have gotten so wild he was uncontrollable in the general population, and human rights people were after them about him being in solitary confinement so much. To this day I question the sanity of the judge's reasoning for committing him to Central State Hospital. Understaffed and with predominantly female employees, -whatever the reasoning, it made little sense to me.

From what I saw in the workshop, Jackson Weathers really was a quiet man. I learned that the old adage, "Its the quiet ones you have to watch," was sometimes very true. If that had not clued me in, the fact that he was a muscular black man of 250 pounds, standing six feet six inches tall should have sent the caution lights flashing.

JW was so quiet it was unnerving; he rarely spoke. He was a very clean, alert and polite man. The records from Westfield were sketchy at best and shed little light on what to expect or be aware of when he became agitated. In two years I had seen no violence in him.

Another patient, Julio Ash, was sitting next to JW at a long assembly table in the workshop. It was break time and Julio was reading a magazine. JW was sitting quietly staring out the window. I was working at a tall bench two tables away from them.

I heard a noise that was a cross between a painful growl and a deep yell. The yell was intense and made the hair on the back of my neck stand up. As I turned, I saw JW pick up a chair and hurl it through the window. These chairs were sturdily built. Then, as if the table were nothing, he sent it sailing and in the same direction.

Glass splintered and crashed to the floor accompanied by broken pieces of wood from the window frame. As the shock of his actions began to wear off, I started toward him. I really don't know why or what I thought I could do but somehow I felt I should at least be in the vicinity. Before I could reach him Julio became intolerant of JW's loud behavior and told him so. My verbal warnings to Julio were too late.

I began calling to JW to divert his attention from beating Julio's head but he did not back off even when I reached the area. Julio was already being struck by a flurry of JW's fisted blows. JW ignored my attempts at pulling on his arm; he was totally focused

on the destruction of Julio's body.

The guttural sounds coming from JW were animalistic and he continued them almost like a chant as he kicked Julio, stuffing his victim under my desk, bloody and unconscious. I heard someone yell for an ambulance to be called. JW was still kicking Julio under the desk when I quit pulling and just laid my hand on his arm and continued talking to him softly. I put another hand on his back gently. I try not to do foolish things as a general rule, but sometimes...

JW turned and looked down at me. I couldn't turn away. It was as if our eyes locked somewhere inside. I laid both hands on his chest and scanned the rest of his face. He allowed me to back him up against a wall, still talking to him gently and patting and talking, patting and talking. To this day I cannot recall what I said. It is beside the point that I was praying feverishly under my breath. With his back against the wall JW just stood there, still looking at me.

His gaze was so out of place for what was happening. The look was gentle and kindly. He stood there as if nothing had happened. He was not even short of breath from the exertion. My hands still on his chest didn't even register a rapid heart rate. Nothing, absolutely no sign that anything had just happened except for the blood on his knuckles. I hoped he could not feel my heart racing. I just knew the top of my head was going to end up flat if I looked away.

He slowly bent over and looked me right in the eye. I figured at first that I was as good as dead. In about the softest voice I believe I have ever heard he began telling me a story about the aliens outside the window in the clouds.

"They were raping God," he confided. "Can't just sit there and let it happen," he

finished. He was so calm I was spellbound. He cried softly as he described the hideous spacecraft, the slimy creatures, God's pain and humiliation. He spoke of how, by throwing things out the window at them, the ship was damaged so badly they ran off.

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. My knees were feeling as if they were made of Jell-O, my stomach was quivering, and so was my bladder. JW was the calm one. I assured both of us that everything would be okay. I saw that he was calming and backed up a step or two to give myself room to take a full breath for a change.

JW was given the option to walk back to his ward alone and took it. The rest of the staff had been busy, because when I turned I found that the workshop had been evacuated and an ambulance was already there. Julio was taken to an off-grounds hospital; he was knocked out, but he was breathing.

JW said that Julio was an alien. His version of reality was not the same as mine and he chose the options open to him that he deemed appropriate to his own reality. Trying to keep this man locked up over a weekend would mean some tense moments on the ward. JW went home on weekends with his family.

JW jumped from a railroad bridge near where the city was building a new zoo the next weekend. The railroad man who saw him jump said it was the strangest thing he had ever seen. He related that JW was yelling at a cloud and tried to jump right up into the sky before he went down into the water.

Don't You Tell Me to Have a Good Day

About every year at CSH, State or Federal or Board of Health or disabilities

agencies or somebody in a business suit and carrying a clipboard made a visit to insure humane treatment for patients or grant accreditation for different funding sources.

As part of the results of these inspections there were usually many changes made. Most were beneficial in the long run, but at times forced and unannounced reductions in client medications were part of the changes. I didn't object to the reduction, only how they did it. I did not know at the time that they had been to Harley Chapman's ward.

Harley attended the sheltered workshop. Harley always wore a smile and liked being the center of attention. He could also be combative at the drop of a hat. He was tall and stocky with several battle scars and looked like an aging prizefighter even though he was only in his late 20s. He was a rough and tumble guy and would even admit that he was generally looking for a fight.

I'm not sure if he enjoyed the physical exertion like a runner when they find their high or was punishing himself for innumerable shortcomings. I knew he didn't look right when he walked in the front double doors. He was mad.

Harley had been a patient in a security facility in Fort Wayne, Ind., for a long time. Harley, like many others had been there since age five and on high doses of Thorazine since then. He had grown up in an institution and really knew no other way of living.

Since my attention was diverted to a minor scuffle in the rest room I had to wait to talk to him. He went on over to my work area and when I did get to the area myself to speak with him I asked if he felt well.

He spoke rapidly through clenched teeth and thin lips pulled back, "I woke up this mornin' feeling like electric bolts made out of pure de fury is runnin' through my blood. I'm mad and can't find a reason why." His eyes were large and bloodshot. "My insides shake like I'm afraid, -like I'm a scardicat kid or something. I can feel the veins in my neck; they shake like Jell-o. Even my hair is standing straight up." Each sentence was getting louder." He was almost yelling now, " My eyes are about to explode; they burn

like fire.”

He closed his eyes tight and rubbed the lines in his forehead hard with the tips of his fingers as if he could erase the lines and presumably a headache from his forehead before he continued. “I’ve been dragged out of a sound sleep at five in the morning for breakfast at six or I won’t get anything to eat until noon. Then they send me to you to do a job I don’t want to do. Go ahead, smile. Tell me ‘Good Morning.’ I dare you!”

I could tell that this was going to be a great day.

He pulled out a piece of a cigar he knew he couldn’t light in the workshop and looked at me with his chin in the air and his jaw clamped in defiance. I knew he wouldn’t light up, he just wanted something comforting to control. We all have our comforts of one kind or another. I winked at him and told him to go to his station and I would be right back, after I got Billy Boatright started at the other end of the table. Harley got his few minutes of victory in peace and I hoped it would defuse him.

After a few more minutes I yelled down to him, “Hey Harley, What’s green and red and goes 250 miles an hour in a circle?” I gave him a few more minutes to get his focus aimed toward the joke and finished with helping Billy Boatright with his schematic. There wasn’t anything else I could do. He was in the safest place I could put him and it was up to him now. Harley acted like he was ignoring me and wore an intense scowl.

He looked like a Neanderthal with that scowl and his dark, brooding, bushy eyebrows in profile. I stifled a giggle and kept a straight face. I caught him trying not to smile once out of the corner of my eye.

The job today for my group was to put 16 pieces of hardware into a plastic bag and close it up with a heat sealer. Billy was our railroad man, he loved imitating train sounds and I needed to get him started before the boredom of waiting made life better on the Santa Fe Line. His part of the assembly process was to lay the pieces out on a board that showed pictures of the nuts, bolts, screws, valve caps, washers, wing nuts, square whatchamacallits, etc. that went into each bag. Billy was pretty good if checked

regularly.

Billy would lay out all the pieces on the pictures of that piece and when the schematic board was full he would call me to check it. He would then tilt the board and let the hardware slide into the bag. Every 30 bags equaled enough money on his paycheck for a candy bar. Billy Boatright counted money in how many Payday candy bars and RC Colas he could buy with it.

That morning Harley was able to last about 45 minutes trying to do what was expected of him. He just couldn't hang on. Even the frog in the blender joke didn't phase him. He had gone from 1500 milligrams to 500 milligrams of Thorazine two days ago.

He had been sent to work without anyone warning us that there had been a change. The explosion in him was unexpected. Of course, we're trained to expect the unexpected and to be prepared for all contingencies ... yea, right!

The group of clients I was working with was in the back of the workshop so I don't know the incident initially got started when Harley went to the restroom up front, but I was definitely there for the ending.

When I heard the commotion and looked up from a schematic board all I saw was a conglomeration of bodies all intertwined in a ball trying to hold Harley Chapman down. I couldn't tell who was on top or in control or even identify all the people involved. When a party like this occurred I always tried to check out which other clients wanted in on a fight that might jump in before I did. This time I didn't have time.

Harley was a strong man. I saw an arm swing at another staff member's head so I grabbed the arm and held on for the ride. I felt like a bug on a windshield wiper, up, down, up down. Harley didn't seem to realize I weighed about 150 pounds. I knew I would not be able to stop him, but I thought that maybe I could at least slow him down a little till help from the ward arrived. It didn't take long to wonder if this was such a good idea!

I was giving out when I heard metal clanging and looked up. Captain Lenny

Scopes, the head of hospital security, was coming with handcuffs and chains. He had a GI bearing and a regulation GI haircut even though it had now turned snow white. The office secretary had called for help

Captain Scopes usually didn't attend these little parties, but he knew Harley's reputation and it was very important for him to control Harley. Harley had put down seven of his men and come out on top to get away a few weeks before. Harley had only been able to elude them long enough to get back to the ward under his own power but that was enough to steam the Captain. Captain Scopes was a military man and control was everything. He felt that Harley had made a fool of him.

The Captain jumped in and relieved me of the arm I was holding. I ran around and located the other arm. I grabbed for it over by his left side but only ended up getting knocked down. By the time I got to my feet again Harley Chapman was in cuffs. The OD came and gave Harley a shot in the hip while we held his body as still as possible.

In my defense, as such a frequent contributor to the workshop fights I must point out that every time I got hold of a hand or arm (even if I couldn't hold on long) it meant that many times he couldn't get a good swing at someone's head. I was always outweighed or not strong enough or in the wrong position, but I could sure grab anything loose and hang on with the best of them, even if I only gave them a target.

After the medicine was in him we just had to hold him long enough for the shot to kick in. Harley looked so sad. His face was contorted with rage under torrents of sweat running down his face mixed with tears. As the medicine took effect we began to assess the damage to Harley and to the rest of us.

Harley had beat himself against the floor pretty badly in the struggle. We wiped blood off his cuts with wet towels and made him as comfortable as we could. He cried and moaned softly, too doped up to move. I pushed his hair back out of his face and stroked his head. He opened an eye. I doubt that he recognized me but his eyes flashed a brief appreciation and I smiled at him. The Captain rolled him over and dragged him

shakily to his feet.

There were only minor scratches and small cuts on everyone except Captain. Scopes. He had an oval-shaped chunk of skin and tissue missing on the inside of his leg where Harley had bit him. He would need a new pair of slacks and a skin graft. The scar he'd have left Harley's mark on the Captain the rest of his life. If Harley could have, I think he would have smiled at this thought; he didn't like the Captain much either. The Captain also required a new watch, x-ray of his jaw, and a dental appointment.

Harley ended up being sent to another institution because everyone was afraid of him. I'm not saying they didn't have good reason to be. Harley had been on heavy doses of medication so long that the medication now did little more than create side effects. They would have to try to find other meds now. My heart went out to him. He never knew what even happened to him but he drew the blame. I never saw Harley again.

Setting Limits

Roberta was a new patient in the workshop. There was much trepidation among the staff when she was assigned because she was a big woman and infamous for a severe lack of temper control and an inability to reason.

She was tall for a woman, about six feet, and weighed about 275 pounds. She stomped rather than walked with a strongly determined gait, swinging her dark brown arms.

Because we knew she was prone to frequent physical aggression, we also knew that she was living on basic instincts and required physical intervention when her reward systems failed to guide her toward the appropriate actions. Most of us working in the workshop, myself included, much preferred reasoning and logic than to have to use physical restraints to protect others or the patient from themselves.

In interviewing Roberta Singer, I asked her what kind of work she enjoyed and what she thought she would be good at doing. To my surprise she responded immediately and very seriously, "Wanna have sex and make gravy."

I've often heard of people limiting their vocational choices, but this was ridiculous. Once I got my voice and facial expression stable to where I could speak without busting out in hysterical laughter, I informed her politely, but strongly, that prostitution was not one of the vocational skills we could train her for. I quickly asked if she'd like to learn to cook.

In the following weeks after exploring the reality of her cooking skills, Roberta was tested for coordination skills, ability to follow instructions, and various other skills she would need to work in a kitchen. She was found to be very limited in ability. In flipping through her chart for functioning-level test results, I found that her medical records noted she was a virgin desperately seeking to change that noble status. That explained a lot! We tested to see in what areas she was capable.

One day she was in a group that was seated in a circle of chairs for discussion purposes. Before the group even got started Roberta got up from her chair, walked over to another patient's chair, and laid on the floor in front of him.

This young man, Lundy, was quiet and good-looking. He just stared at Roberta in surprise as she lay her arms submissively at her sides. Her toes were expectantly pointed and her body lay rigid at his feet. She looked into his eyes with a strained wide smile.

I ran to her thinking she'd fallen or was ill. I didn't recall any history of seizures in her chart. I asked if she was hurt and she just continued her fixed gaze at the man standing there. She asked, "Wanna have sex?"

This ritual became a daily routine in her short evaluation period. Each man of her choosing reacted a little differently and a few were willing to oblige her request and had to be firmly deterred. Having Roberta around added a little more color to our daily routine for weeks. It wasn't long before she was sent to a training group focused on

leisure skills training. I only saw her on the ward after that. The last time was laying in front of Ralph Hollowell.

Workshop Willie

Willie arrived mad. His face was red with rage brighter than his hair. Efforts to get him to vent what happened to upset him were useless. What he was saying made no sense. There would be no solace for his anger. We went over options of ways to help him and exhausted everything we could do that might do Willie any good. We knew it wouldn't take long before Willie's behavior wore on everyone else and copycat behaviors began.

The decision was made to return Willie to the ward to talk with the behavior counselor. This suggestion to Willie was like throwing gas on a fire. He yelled, he kicked skids he passed, and he growled at people he knew he shouldn't growl at. He did everything he could to put on a show and try to involve others in his anger. We really didn't want to have to wrestle him to the floor again today.

Willie's timing was usually pretty good for garnering the best effect. Today was an exception. He was in the middle of his escalating tirade and going out the door when the team leader from his unit was coming in the door.

Juan Horres worked with Willie for years and in no mood for Willie's show of frustration. (Later we found out it was Juan who made him mad on the ward to begin with.)

Juan backed out the door as Willie came toward him and as soon as Willie was outside the door, Juan used his long legs to step around Willie and close the door. He shut Willie out in the middle of his sentence.

Stone silence came from outside the door. We were all ready to burst out laughing but didn't dare let him hear. Juan stood at the door awaiting Willie's next move. Bang! two fists hit the door window. The door had a small window that I had to stand on tip toes to look out. Julio just leaned over and glanced out. Bang! Bang!

Willie was attempting to break the glass. Fortunately, it was strong Plexiglass and wouldn't break no matter how many times he hit it with his fist. Juan told him to go back to the ward but Willie answered with only another Bang!

Willie cried and cursed and pitched his snit fit, then began hitting the Plexiglass again. "If I couldn't hit any harder than that," Juan yelled, "I'd just give up and quit!" Bang! Bang! Bang! Willie retorted with his fists. At that point Willie was beginning to tire and cry and we couldn't hear him anymore.

Juan went around to the back of the building when he couldn't see Willie out the window. With Juan's long legs running he barely was able to grab Willie as he plunged himself over the rails and down toward the concrete at the bottom of the library steps. A 20-foot drop and landing on his head, as he surely would have killed Willie.

Willie didn't have the internal resources to find a way to tell somebody how badly he was hurting. He *was* telling us as loudly as he knew how.

Willie was put on suicide watch and checked every 15 minutes while restricted to the ward. Months later we found out that he had experienced a brief episode of clarity and understood fully his place in this world and couldn't process the information. I

couldn't imagine what that information did to him. Willie reverted back to the Willie who lives to pester and blissfully lost all insight.

Everybody Loves Coffee

Ralph Hollowell was a short, stocky man built to squeeze as much power and strength into one small body as possible. His neck was as thick as a football player's and his hair was close cropped to his head and sometimes worn in a crew cut. He reminded me of a pitbull. He was allergic to bananas and he seized when he ate them. Still, he ate them as often as he could get them.

When I first met him he had a devilish grin that revealed brown, jagged, broken teeth stained by years of excessive use of cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and coffee. Eventually they fell out and he got dentures, but while he had those teeth they were weapons and he frequently bit those who angered him. Even the most arrogant weren't willing to steal from him because he would get them with those teeth. A human bite is much worse than that of an animal.

Hollowell's coffee, cigarettes, and tobacco chews were his life's blood. He carried powdered instant coffee with him everywhere. Usually when break time came he would make himself a cup by pouring a little coffee direct from the jar into one of our styrofoam cups and save the cup for later use outside, too. Stirring or using a spoon to measure or even hot water didn't seem necessary. In a 15-minute break he could down three or four cups. I think he could have made it from a mud puddle and not blinked an eye. This was in the days before we knew of caffeine's effects and his mother made sure he had plenty.

On a very busy day the patients often lost their tempers and fought over the water cooler to make cold coffee. As Ralph reached the cooler that was attached to the wall next to the men's restroom another patient hit his elbow and the sacred coffee jar hit the concrete floor with enough force to break.

I was blissfully ignorant of this occurrence until I heard the yelling. I was in my work area in the back to get my production counts calculated. When I heard the commotion up front I ran toward the sound. When I got to floor supervisor, Charlene Bumfield's, work area I saw her talking intently to Ralph. Charlene was a petite woman of about 30. She had mousy brown hair and protruding upper front teeth. She was about 100 pounds if she was soaking wet and was generally a good-natured woman, but I questioned why she worked here, more than once. At \$7,300 a year in 1980 we were not going to get rich.

Charlene was a very self-intuned person. If she was near a patient who needed something she was usually glad to help them. When a patient ran out of supplies and Charlene had already returned to her desk to do paperwork or tally her production counts, she'd let them sit there without concern for their needs and let them loose money waiting on her to help them. Working with her felt like she was just here to put in hours to earn a paycheck. If she had to be inconvenienced to help them they had to do without. She didn't have the patient's welfare a very high priority like most of the staff.

She hung out a lot with another staff member, a young, good-looking black man. I was told that they were having an affair and in this time period that was still a rarity as she was white. Soap operas are not m thing, so I didn't pay much attention to the who-was-sleeping-with-whom tracks that ran through the hospital grapevine. I just did what I

always did; I filed the information somewhere on a dusty shelf in the back of my mind and went on. You never knew when you were going to need somebody to pull somebody off your back.

One look at Ralph's reddened face told me how angry he was. One look at Charlene's face told me how scared she was. Ralph had scooped up his coffee off the floor into a plastic bag and wanted to make a cup of coffee. Charlene was trying to take it away from him. She knew there had to be glass slivers in it. They each stood with their hands wrapped around the plastic bag and neither would let go.

If you have ever been bit, you know the thought of those brown rotted teeth of Ralph's sinking into Charlene's skin struck terror in her soul. She had every right to be scared. Another floor supervisor, James, approached from the other side and we had the duo sandwiched between us. Charlene was still trying to convince Ralph that drinking the coffee laced with glass slivers would not be healthy for him and he was still trying to convince her that taking it from him would not be good for her health either.

There was no way to keep Ralph from drinking that coffee except by physically forcing it from his hands. And laying our hands on him meant there was no going back; we'd have to take him down all the way. I personally questioned whether that was physically possible. At best we would only be able to manage holding him down until help arrived from the ward. A call for "all available" (staff assistance) had already been made.

I remembered the last time I had had to lay hands on Ralph. He attacked a friend of mine who worked his ward. Her only offense was interrupting his favorite television program. He brooded for days over the incident and when she came out of a patient's

room on the ward he got her. She had to wear a brace on her face like a baseball catcher's face mask to protect her broken nose and chipped jawbone. The broken ribs were bound tight and she looked like a refugee from a boxing ring with cuts and bruising.

For now we were hoping against hope that Charlene could defuse him verbally, and that ward staff would arrive before it was too late to avoid a full battle. I wondered how long they could stand clutching the plastic bag before the glass slivers cut a hand. I figured he'd go for her throat when he'd had enough. I was thinking how we had been lucky so far when he broke and ran.

He jerked the bag unexpectedly when she sneezed and caught her off guard. He jammed the bag into his jeans pocket and turned for the back door. Unfortunately, I was in the way and got bowled over. With an elbow into my chest he knocked the breath out of me. His head got my cheekbone and I could feel moisture trickle down my neck. I landed on my rear and was back on my feet as soon as I found a breath I could use to avoid being vulnerable. Thankfully, he kept going for the door. Charlene was right behind him and James right behind her.

As Ralph got to the door, the biggest man I think I have ever seen was in the doorway. He was bigger than Mr. Haige had been and he worked on the ward Ralph was from. The cavalry had come over the hill. I was almost giddy. Two, also admirably proportioned, women accompanied him. I thought Ralph would be intimidated and calm down, then remembered where I was.

I saw Ralph dive into them and heard that signature growl. By the time it was over James sported a wonderful black eye and Charlene had a long, deep scratch down her left shoulder and another on her forearm. One of the female attendants had a big tear

in her white uniform, ruined her hose, and had been bitten even though he didn't get a good jaw clamp. The other attendant had her hair pulled pretty good and had broken her watch. The big man sported bruises like James for a few days where he was kicked, but otherwise escaped much harm. My chest remained sore for a while and my chin was only minimally hurt so again I thanked God for His good grace.

Ralph was in cuffs lying on his stomach on the concrete floor. I breathed easier by the minute. The coffee bag had been ripped and glass-laced coffee was spewed all over the floor. James in his usual obsessive-compulsive thinking was the first to recognize that we had another danger. We would soon have 30 plus other patients wanting to scoop up the coffee. In his quiet, efficient manner, James just grabbed a nearby mop bucket of soapy water and threw it onto the powdered coffee. Not even the clients would drink that.

Turrets Syndrome

Marty Redding was a strikingly good-looking young man in his early 20s. He had the ruggedly chiseled facial features of the Marlboro man. His exceedingly courteous manners with older women and gently curled black hair ingratiated him with clients and staff alike upon first meeting him. He had soft, sensitive eyes that could have made him a successful gigolo in another life. He lived for attention from women.

Unfortunately, Marty's charm wore thin quickly. He had Turrets Syndrome and had since childhood and he was also bipolar. He learned to manipulate and mask symptoms of his bipolar disorder for short periods and to become a chameleon, to be what was expected in any situation and he was good at it, but he couldn't maintain the

facade. His mood swings betrayed him. Marty's particular symptoms included involuntary movements of his extremities as well as involuntary speech elements, which usually tended to manifest as obscenities. These could occur at any time and could be counted on to exhibit themselves at the worst possible moments. Stressful situations at work seemed to precipitate episodes too.

Examples of his tics in minor cases included a jerk of the head, torso, arm, or leg. More severe a cases meant having to replace plumbing fixtures when he reached for a faucet handle while turning on/off water faucets in sinks and showers. Marty was tall and had long legs. Sometimes a tic took out the light fixture in his bedroom ceiling.

While most of us were comfortable with a personal space of three feet or less, a six foot personal space was afforded Marty all the times he was in the workshop as a safety precaution under doctor's orders. After he left his shoe print on Norma's face as she walked passed him it became a 12 feet minimum in my group.

The verbal tics were the worst. They incited fights with other clients and the environment couldn't be changed enough to safeguard everyone who might be offended by Marty's colorful outbursts. There were the inevitable four letter words, usual name-calling, and references to questionable ancestry in the vocabulary that was so indigenous to most clients in an institutional setting. Marty had a real creative flair that added an extra spark to verbal sparing.

He would refer to a girl as she walked by as "Miss elastic ass" or refer to the guys as "mathematicians" to refer to slender pencil-shaped appendages. I think it was because many of the developmentally disabled clients couldn't figure out the subtle insult that angered them so. They knew they were offended, but were not sure what he meant. These

words and short phrases flew out of Marty's mouth with the tripled force of a sneeze and often as unexpectedly. That of course added to their impact on others. Marty would charmingly apologize for his tic and in the middle of the apology a few additional tics would escape.

Some workshop staff and also ward staff got very angry and asserted that the Turrets was phony and Marty just enjoyed manipulating and agitating others. I don't doubt that there was some truth in this assessment, but the behavior was persistent and no matter what the cause, it had to be dealt with. Every day that Marty was at work was a very tense three hours. Days he was off were peace for the soul. It was strange how the clients stayed so quiet listening to the silence.

One day Marty came to work with his right arm straight up over his shoulder with his bicep crouched near his ear. His elbow was bent to take his arm around the back of his head and wrapped around his head in the most gastly strained position I have ever seen. It looked like he was trying to grab and claw his face with fingers that would no longer be still. People deemed this an attention-seeking behavior and tried many behavior modification techniques. I have come to see times of attention-seeking as times people feel out of control most.

Two years later Marty's arm was still wrapped around his head. By then he was moved into a group home. I attended many of his Interdisciplinary Team Meetings as his guest. After a year or so our schedules began to clash and I could no longer attend regularly. I still saw him frequently because he lived in the area where I was working.

Three years after that, it was no longer wrapped around his head. I am eternally thankful, as I am sure that he is, that one woman didn't give up on him. She was his first

staff in the group home and remained with him until he moved out into his own apartment. He is now in his own apartment. I still see him walking to and from work at the local grocery and he always has a beautiful smile and a hug for me. I learned that sometimes motivation for a behavior means so much less than belief in a man's spirit. I am reminded to be patient every time a client gets irate with me. If I can continue that and learn to be the same with staff, family and others I will be much better off.

Willie Brings It Home

Baseball was big at CSH and both residents and staff played, especially with the kids. It was a safe exercise that was minimally physically combative (most of the time) and anyone, no matter what the disability, could play. Unlike football and basketball, it was even safe to have residents versus staff games.

There were usually a lot of residents off the adolescent unit at Bahr Building participating and many had decent coordination. As staff, we figured we really had our work cut out for us to have a chance at beating them because we spotted them so many runs ahead.

In the last inning the residents had not only eliminated the handicap we had afforded them, but they looked like they were going to be able to beat us in real points. The score was tied and the hospital superintendent was laughing his head off and teasing (I hoped) that our raises were dependent on the outcome of the game.

Staff was up to bat and we had Mrs. Collins, a large, black ward attendant at the plate. She might have looked like she would beat the pitcher to death with the bat in her

blue jeans and flannel shirt if it hadn't been for her sequined blouse and multiple rings on each hand. The menacing stare she gave the pitcher should have melted the cowhide right off the ball as it flew through the air. I knew her heart to be full of soft smiles and marshmallows when it came to helping the residents, so I didn't buy the mean look she gave the pitcher.

The game umpire (the wimpy accounting office clerk and GI Joe wannabe who was too afraid to play ball himself) seemed to think that anywhere the ball went in front of Mrs. Collins was fair play and a strike. It didn't take long for her to strike out. The look she gave the umpire made him shiver when she walked by him to the staff bench. She really tried but she couldn't help uttering a few choice words as she left the plate. Behind her the catcher giggled impishly.

On deck was Dr. Ran Din Hao. He wore bifocal glasses and his depth perception was not exactly something to brag about. Two up, two down. Our last chance brought a smile to my face. Big Al was up to bat. He was a big man with a good eye and was our best chance to save face. My spirits visibly brightened. Then they changed pitchers and put in a southpaw from the alcoholic unit. Big Al was not so good with left-handed pitchers. My thoughts wandered a moment and the *swosh* sound of the bat hitting nothing but air jerked me back to reality. The count was three and two. How'd that happen? The pitcher's throw jammed him up on the last pitch and the ball sailed straight up into a pop fly and was easily caught. Three outs. The opposition was up to bat again.

If they got even one run we would eat crow until next spring. Jesus, Michael and John were up next in the patient's line up. Jesus was off the kids' unit. With six pitches,

Doc Holly got him out. Michael got a base hit with the first pitch. He was a fast runner and liked to steal bases.

John, another athletic teen, entered the batter's box eager to go to first. I leaned back and began to consider witty comebacks I could use to fend off all the comments we would endure over getting beaten so badly. Michael stole second base. John hit a line drive to third, which took care of Michael going to third, and John was out at first in seconds in a text book double play, two down.

I couldn't help but smile as I saw Willie come to the plate. I'm ashamed of myself but truth is truth. Willie would have a hard time seeing the bat if someone didn't put it in his hand, never mind seeing the ball to get a hit. Willie could be a force to be reckoned with, but his eyesight was bad. To be fair, Willie shouldn't have played because he'd had pink eye recently, but he wanted to play so he got to.

There was a brief argument from both coaches about switching the lineup and substituting for Willie, but the umpire got out his little set of rules and that was that.

Willie was led into the batter's box. The bat was laid on his shoulder and he was physically positioned for the pitch. Doc Holly wound up and lobbed one across in front of Willie and I heard the catcher (a guy who worked in dietary, I knew his face but not his name) yell, "swing!"

Willie was as dumbfounded as the rest of us when the ball hit the bat. The catcher yelled "Run!" and Willie took off waddling toward first base. The ball slow-rolled passed Doc Holly as he stood there with his mouth open in shock and watched the ball continue to roll. Their first base coach got the ball and touched Willie to tag him out, missed, then

turned toward second dropping the ball. Sometimes we made up rules to fit the need. The ball lay dead at his feet while he stared at it.

The shortstop grabbed the ball and pulled back to pitch it to second when he was tackled from behind. Willie's girlfriend sat on the shortstop and the ball rolled toward center field. Willie got passed third and almost all the way to home plate when his eyes teared up with emotion and blurred his limited vision even more. He couldn't find home plate. The world moved in slow motion as Willie's foot found the corner of the plate just before the catcher felt the ball tuck into the pocket of his mitt from mid air. The umpire gave credit where credit was due as he stood scratching his head with a big grin.

Lil LeRoy Teddy Bear

Lil' LeRoy was more than a coworker. Few people were always true to who they really were. Always being true to you, instead of becoming what is acceptable to others expectations took a special strength. Lil' LeRoy was always Lil' LeRoy, no matter whether anyone liked it or not, he was always true to himself. He was also a true friend to me. He had been my adopted brother for a long time.

Lil' LeRoy was a 6'4" 350 lb. teddy bear. He was also an unforgivable womanizer and threatened to run off to Hawaii with me about every other day even though he knew this was a joke. His warmth, genuineness, charms and undiluted smile kept him lovable. I spent half my time wondering how he had managed to live so long without somebody (including me) killing him and the other half thankful to call him friend.

He'd had trouble all day trying to keep Charley Cooper under control until it was time for him to go back to the ward. Charley was a client who, at 19, was young enough to still have his hormones running his thinking.

He was an expert runaway. He had escaped the confines of the hospital and gotten as far as Michigan or Florida on more than one occasion. He once made it all the way to New Mexico. When he got tired and hungry on one of his unauthorized vacations he would flag down a policeman and tell the officer that he was an escapee from a mental institution in Indiana. The police would feed him, let him clean up, arrange his transportation, and then he would end his trip by sleeping all the way back to Central State. Charley arrived back on his ward well-rested, well-fed, and able to brag about his adventures the minute he stepped onto the ward.

Charley was what many referred to as a *Smart Alec* and more than just a little rebellious by nature. He fought any type of authority, was headstrong, and had a very volatile temper to go with his dark red hair.

If Lil' LeRoy could keep Charley from becoming agitated today for 3 hours he deserved a medal. If Charley couldn't be kept calm, then he needed to go back to the ward immediately. I did not know how much longer Charley could maintain control. It was not safe to let him blow in the workshop. There were too many tools to use as weapons.

Lil' LeRoy came into my work area to quietly warn me that Charley was beginning to be agitated again. He was planning to send him back to the ward. Lil' LeRoy asked me if I would follow Charley to the door and make sure he got out okay while Lil' LeRoy called to warn them he was coming. The sight of a male authority figure usually set him off so I escorted him to the door assuring him that he would be fine. I usually got away with playing mama even when I was young.

Charley seemed a little tense, but talked calmly as he walked with me and was almost to the back door. As he laid his hand on the doorknob he looked back to say good-bye. That's when Charley saw Lil' LeRoy on the phone talking to his ward. The connecting doors to the offices had been left open.

Dirty words and body functions were all I could think of as I caught a glimpse of

the fist aiming for the left side of my head. I leaned the top half of me to the right and the fist went past. Before I could revel in this good fortune, I felt his elbow hit the back of my left ear. The sinuses back there had been clogged for about a week. I think I finally heard them pop. Between the force of the elbow and the fact that I was already off balance leaning to the right I continued downward. My right elbow hit the concrete floor first. Pop! I hated that sound.

By this point Charley had swung a leg over me and was sitting on me as if I should have on a saddle. I was lying very awkwardly on my right side with my right arm useless underneath me.

I was surprised to find that I wasn't really in any pain. My body was actually pretty numb even though I was intellectually aware that Charley was using my head as a punching bag. I was probably in shock, and I was appropriately grateful. By this time Lil' LeRoy had heard the scuffle. From my vantage point on the floor with Charley on top of me, all I could see was a shoe.

I sensed Lil' LeRoy grabbing Charley's weight off of me. Hope returned. When I saw Lil' LeRoy's shoes lifted off the floor and I felt Charlie's body rise higher in conjunction, that my heart sank again. I heard Lil' LeRoy's bulk hit the wall by the breakroom door and slide down the wall. I could see part of him and it wasn't a pretty sight. How the mighty had fallen.

I saw two more shoes, clients I thought, and wasn't sure if they were clients who might possibly want to help Charley. The door opened and we had got more shoes. My mind was becoming warped and I was laying there wondering why a shoe was called a shoe. Why not a horse or a tree? Oh, I was in good shape!

When the cobwebs in my head cleared, I found out that Matt and Nick had pulled Charley off of me and I was eternally grateful. Matt and Nick were two patients that were usually the ones most attendants watched out for. They were constantly in some kind of trouble. They were young, strong, and just smart enough to know they had rights.

These same qualities also made them expert manipulators.

Security arrived, I was alive, and all was right with the world. I was so thrilled to be alive that I forgot all about my arm and did not realize that it was really broken until the next day. Once I was off that floor all I wanted to do was go home.

Lil' LeRoy and I had screwed up. The door to the office hadn't been closed. Charley should never have been able to see Lil' LeRoy making that call.

Once Charley was restrained by security, his anger dissipated and he accepted the fact that he could not escape the ward restriction. He then came to see this restriction as an occasion to rest up for one of his unauthorized vacations to parts unknown.

Batball

One of the ceiling panels was missing in the workshop and formed a square hole in the ceiling deck. To the right side of the square I could see the skylight in the roof. This ceiling opening also gave opportunity for the creatures that inhabited the small ceiling room created just under the roof to deposit small "gifts" down the hole on occasion. Sometimes I would be working away and a small feather would float down, sometimes a clump of dirt, chips of plaster or wood, sometimes other less desirable elements. Spiders, mice, a coon on occasion, pigeons, an owl, and several bats that I knew about occupied the ceiling room.

One morning patients were arriving from the wards about 8 AM for work. It was a cold winter day, still very dark early in the morning. A tall, thin black man named Marshal was the first one into the work area. He had a large smile and a kind word for me every morning. Marshal often sang in the choir at his mother's church as well as doing solos. He had a wonderful voice. Occasionally, he would sing down home gospel songs because he knew that I loved to hear him sing.

The scream from Marshal and the screech from the bat came about the same

time. The bat had decided not to go to sleep this morning. It was repeatedly diving at Marshal's bald head. Marshal was tripping all over himself in a panic. He was ducking, yelling, and swatting wildly with his arms and had his eyes closed. He was at a disadvantage to escape because he had trapped himself between the break area counter and some work skids next to it.

When I got to him he was too combative to get near. I was too short to be effective. I couldn't even fend off all of his blows. Another staff member, Jay, who was luckily a tall fellow, came along and put an upside down trash can on Marshal's head and Marshal stopped dead in his tracks. This allowed me time to guide him into a small breakroom out of harm's way. I ushered every other patient I could find in behind him and then nonchalantly remained myself. After all the clients were safely in a protected place with a secondary lowered ceiling, the incident became comical.

Lil' LeRoy and another coworker, Jay, were fighting the bat armed with brooms. I, on the other hand, felt called to keep all the patients in the break room, safely watching through the door's little glass panes and deciding whom to root for. Jay was over 6 feet tall, still fairly young and athletically built. Lil LeRoy was also tall but older and having heavily indulged in life's best excesses carried the consequences around with him in bulk.

Jay grabbed himself another trash can as his war helmet. The bat continued to dive at any movement. Jay and Lil' LeRoy looked ridiculous. Their brooms moved as if in slow motion *batting* at a very fast critter. The bat scored slightly on Lil' LeRoy's head and he ran from the room, totally out of character for this mountain of a man. After a moment he returned ready for war -or maybe a hockey game.

Lil' LeRoy had put on his army green, hip-length coat with the fur-lined hood, and the hood was tightened until only his eye's showed. He had on thick snow shoveling gloves and had obtained an empty bread rack from dietary next door for a shield. He was so padded, he could hardly move.

When Jay spotted Lil' LeRoy he froze and Lil' LeRoy didn't see him stop as he

swung. The bat hit the trash can on Jay's head soliciting a roar of laughter from the break area. I was so glad I was at work today; I wouldn't have missed this for the world.

Of course, the workshop cat, Fishlips, just sat on the sidelines awaiting his turn and watching patiently as if the event was a tennis match, head turning from side to side atop a tall skid as the bat mount its attacks.

The comedy continued for almost an hour and my chest was sore from laughing. The bat made another pass at Lil' LeRoy in his makeshift goalie outfit. Lil' LeRoy finally got him squarely with his broom to send the bat sailing to a far wall and behind a tall skid of boxes full of shirts.

The sigh of relief came simultaneously from everyone and Lil' LeRoy and Jay were heartily congratulated. They went in search of the bat to claim their prize and make certain of its demise while I got the group started out of the break area by the back door. In my peripheral vision I saw Fishlips slip out the door with a twinkle in her eye and their prize in her mouth.

Epilog

We gather memories of people in our lives like bundles of colorful spring flowers and hold them close. People we have met that have meant something to us are well-treasured blooms in our abundant garden. They grow with us along the way for a time then fall away. If we are lucky, a few remain our full growing season, if not, we mourn their flight along the wind. Here I have introduced only a few of the early blooming flowers I have met.

Memories of roses I have gathered such as Amelia, Pearl, Alice and Florence gave to me the gift of their inner beauty before they left this earth. The beauty of others like Marty, Marshal, Billy, and Roberta withered long before they got a chance to fully bloom.

Some with thorns ended up in prisons. Ezel, Bessie, Ulysses, and many others are finishing out their days in nursing homes or have passed beyond pain's reach.

Mitch, Willie, and Patrick are your neighbors. They work, get tired, laugh, and miss old friends and play. They pray, go to movies, have cookouts, and hate paying taxes on money they work to bring home. They live as we do, but I think most of them enjoy and appreciate their lives more because of where they have been.

I have learned so many of life's most important lessons from those that people have said could not themselves be taught. I can't help but think that every time we think in a way that diminishes another we stunt our own growth and miss out on invaluable experiences. I can only wish you, the reader, as rich a bouquet of life as I have been provided. I am truly thankful for my growth.

III.

The Pathology Building Maintains History

The buildings of Central State Hospital in 2003 mostly stand falling apart and deserted. Only a few of the last buildings remain and they are falling into ruin amidst minimally maintained grounds. The pathology building is the last remaining gem of the past. As the second pathology building in the state, the pathology building was connected to the Indiana University School of Medicine. The museum survives on donations to preserve the memory of the sacrifices made by those who furthered medical advancement to help others by their pain, affliction, trials of their daily lives, and finally in their deaths.

It is because of those patients and the physicians who treated them with what knowledge they had at that time, that those suffering from mental illnesses today have a better quality of life. That fact is well exhibited in the museum's archives for those unafraid to view our history's more difficult lessons.



Erected 1895.

PATHOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

Designed by George F. Edenharter, M. D., Supt.

Photo: Indiana Archives

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum

Dr. G. F. Edenharter's dream of studying the connection between the physical and mental illness came to fruition here in the most up to date and cutting edge laboratory of the time. Their work lay the foundation which made possible the benefits of medications we use to help patients today.



Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum



Human brains used in research. These were obtained by procedures after death and by partial lobotomy on live patients in an effort to relieve their suffering.

Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum



Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum

Physicians spoke into the tube on the wall for a scribe to document information in the medical record books in the room above where the doctor worked. The body basket shown was never used at CSH, but something like it was used to transfer bodies to what we referred to as the "dead house."



Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Medical History Museum



Copper drain tray for washing removed organs

Floor drain built into the table. Standing by is a bucket to hold Removed organs and scales with Multiple weights to weigh and measure.



Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum



Student Lecture Hall and Balcony

Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum



Physician's Desk, Chair and Photography Equipment

Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum



Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

Pathology Building

Now known as the Indiana Medical History Museum



Research Equipment

Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001

MS 369
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Pathology Building

Now known as the Medical History Museum



Back Entrance - also shows the "dead house" -CSH version of a morgue

Photo: Vickie L. Cole, c-2001