

PA. Archives 1

Many photos taken at Cresson sanatorium have been obtained from the Pa. State Archives, 350 North Street, Harrisburg, Pa. 17120 Phone (717) 783-3281 My thanks to Mike Sherbon of the archives for his help and cooperation in obtaining these photos.

The following eight photos were taken April 5, 1945 and show the children in the Cresson Preventorium at play and in the classroom. None of the children are identified. The preventorium children obviously were not sick with TB as they would never have been allowed out to play in the inclement cold weather depicted in these photos. Instead, the cold conditions were thought to increase their stamina and health and so prevent them from developing tuberculosis.



1. Children's' Playground



2. Children's Playground

Childrens Playground
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

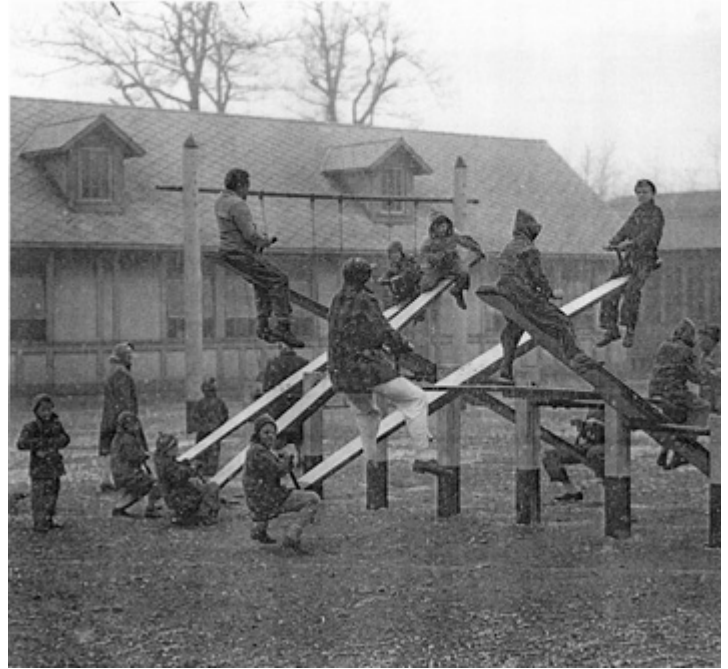
Apr. 5, 1945



3. Children's Playground

Childrens Playground
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr. 5, 1945



4. Children's Playground

Little tots playground
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr. 5, 1945



5. Little Tot's Playground

Small childrens playground
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr. 5, 1945



6. Little Tot's Playground

a school Room
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr. 5, 1945



7. School Room

School
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

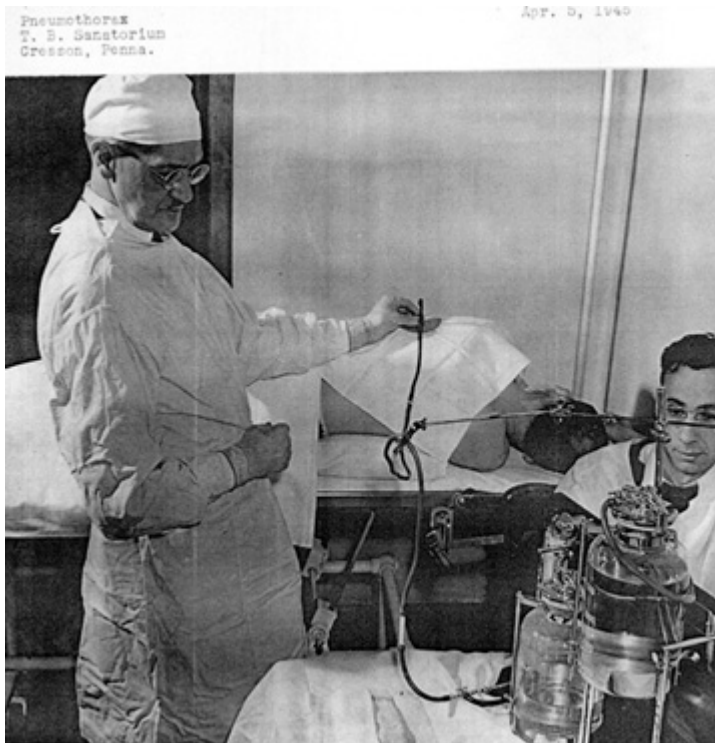
Apr. 5, 1945



8. School Room

PA Archives 2

The photos were taken in 1945 seemingly with the specific intent to document the basic scenes of life at Cresson san from both the patient and staff points of view. It was surprising to both Ron Nowicki and myself that we knew so many of the patients and staff shown in these photos.



1. Male patient receiving pneumothorax in his side from Dr. Cramer.



2. Female patient receiving pneumothorax from Dr. Giovini Fusco.

Blood Smear Differentials
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr. 5, 1945



3. Blood Smear Differentials

L to R LaBelle Stankard, James Billis, Alvin Wilson, Esther Eberle

Dental Office
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr. 5, 1945



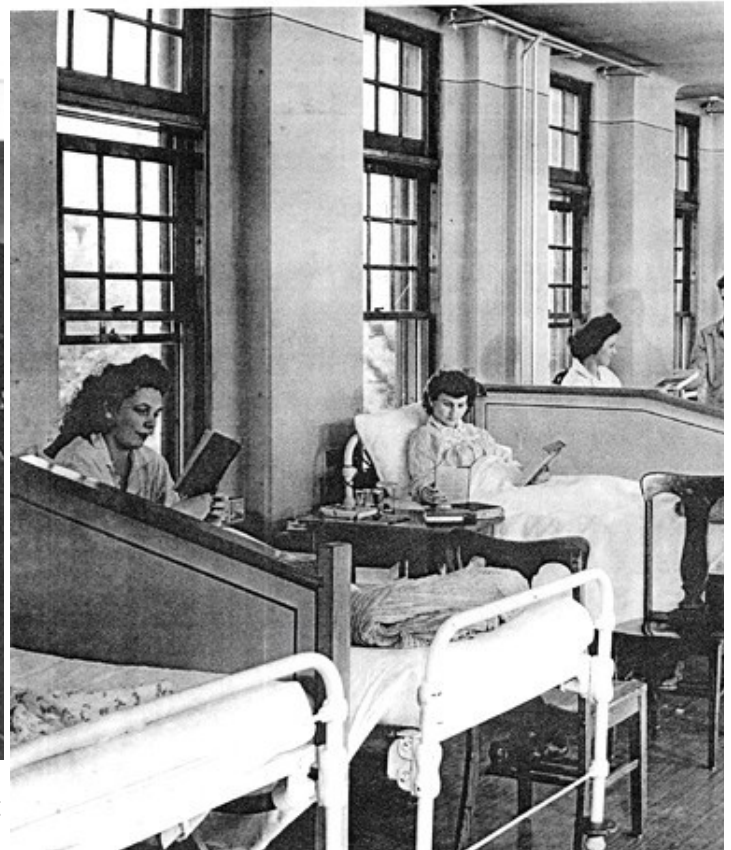
4. Dental Office Dr. C. E. Provan

X-ray Library
T. B. Sanatorium
Cresson, Penna.

Apr.



5. X-ray Reading. The top left x-rays show the patient has had a lung removed. We were x-rayed once a month to check our progress. L to R Dr. James I.



Borland, Joseph Hajdu, Radiology Technician. (Dr Borland was my doctor in 1955, Chuck Felton)

6. Typical ward setup consisted of a bed, table & chair for each patient. The wooden partitions afforded minimal sense of privacy. The san had a library and sent the book mobile through the wards once a week. I believe that is Mr Janis Kreicbergs the librarian on the right.



7. Patients store located near the dining room. The woman on the left is Mrs. Inez Wilson, a patient on meals who worked in the store in 1945. (By 1956, when I made meals and worked in the store for 3 hours each morning as part of my rehab, she was the store manager and my boss. Chuck Felton)



8. Patients watching a movie in the theater. Local high school students often put on their class plays for the entertainment of the patients.



9. The san closed circuit radio station, WSAN, located in the basement. A microphone, turntable and some records were pretty much it. The person in the photo is Chuck Latta of Youngwood, Pa. However, Chuck Felton had this same broadcast job in 1956 and Ron Nowicki did the honors in 1955.

10. Sputum & Urinalysis Tests Our sputem was tested each month for presence of TB bacillus.
L to R George Elder, Esther Eberle,
Alvin Wilson, LaBelle Stankard



11. Dr. Harry W. Weest (left) with two visitors from Washington, DC. The following item appeared in the American Journal of Public Health in Oct 1945:



12. L to R: Mr. Richard Acciavatti, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation, Dr. Harry W. Weest, Medical Director and an unidentified visitor from Washington, DC.

LT. COL. WEEST APPOINTED PENNSYLVANIA

SECRETARY OF HEALTH

Governor Edward Martin of Pennsylvania announced on August 20 that Lt. Col. Harry W. Weest, former Chief Surgeon of the 28th Division, U. S. Army, has been appointed State Secretary

of Health, succeeding A. H. Stewart, A.I.D., of Indiana, Pa., who died July 31. Dr. Weest, whose home is in Altoona, has been associated with the Governor in military circles since 1922. He is a graduate in medicine of Jefferson Medical College in 1919 and, except for his war service, has practised medicine in Altoona.

(Note: Dr Weest served as Secretary of Health from 1945-1947.)

Dr Weest, in his position as Chief Surgeon of the 28th Division, U. S. Army, had a connection with a famous military execution.

Edward Donald Slovik (February 18, 1920 – January 31, 1945) was a private in the US Army during WW2 and the only American soldier to be executed for desertion since the American Civil War. Slovik was assigned to Company G of the 109th Infantry Regiment, US 28th Infantry Division. He refused to fight in the line and was executed for desertion.

Dr. Weest was one of the doctors consulted about the Slovik case. His testimony regarding the case is documented in the following book:

[The Execution of Private Slovik by William Bradford Huie](#)



13. All three people in this photo are unidentified.

PA Archives 3

The following photos were taken in 1958 and show the various occupational therapy activities patients were engaged in as part of their rehab before being discharged.



1. I saw hundreds of these dolls made by the men patients in the wards. They would often sell them to visitors to make some extra money.



2. Hand tooling leather to make wallets. I made my younger brother Tom a hand tooled black leather 2-gun holster set with replica metal guns. I think the whole holster/gun set weighed more than he did.

T.B. HOSPITAL 11/12-13/58
Patient taking test for rehabilitation



3. Performing an aptitude test for Mr. Richard Acciavatti, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation.

T.B. Hospital 11/12-13/58
Patient making a charcoal drawing of nurse



4. Osbourn Harris drawing portrait of Nurse Ella Marie Hogue.



5. The teacher in this photos is the one and only Mary Mackereth. She was still teaching Chuck Felton and Ron Nowicki in the mid-1950's. She taught us by our beds when we were in the ward and , after we made meals, we had classes with her down at the one-room school house that was just a few yards up the road from the Surgery Building. I could see the school house from my ward.



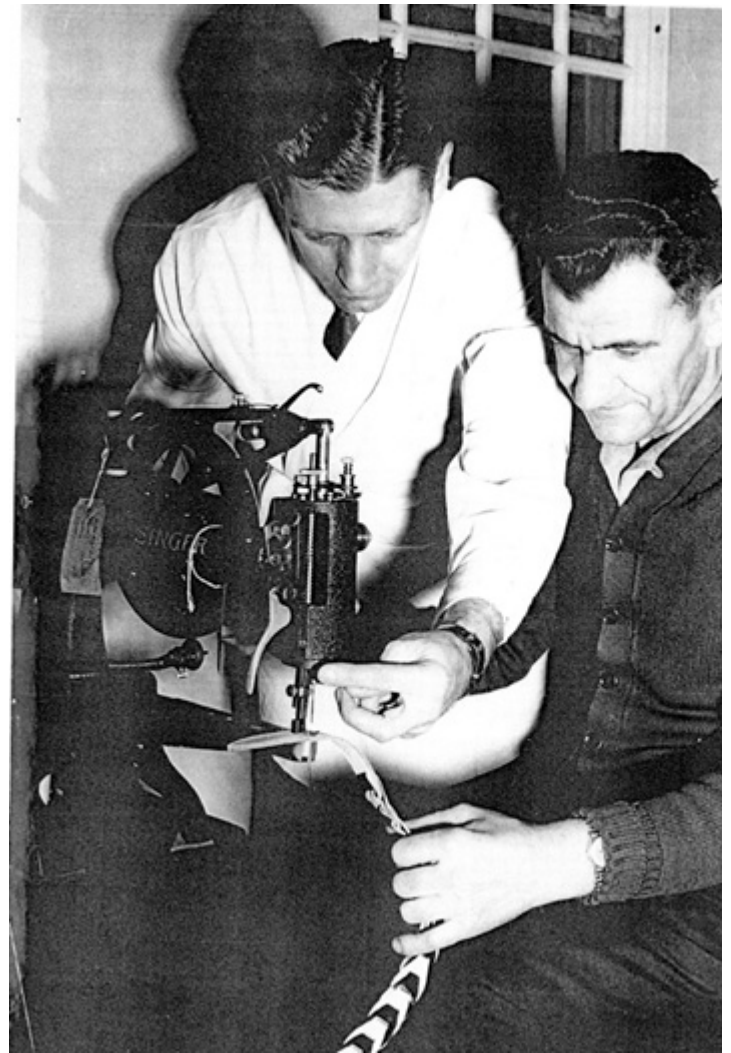
6. Typing class.



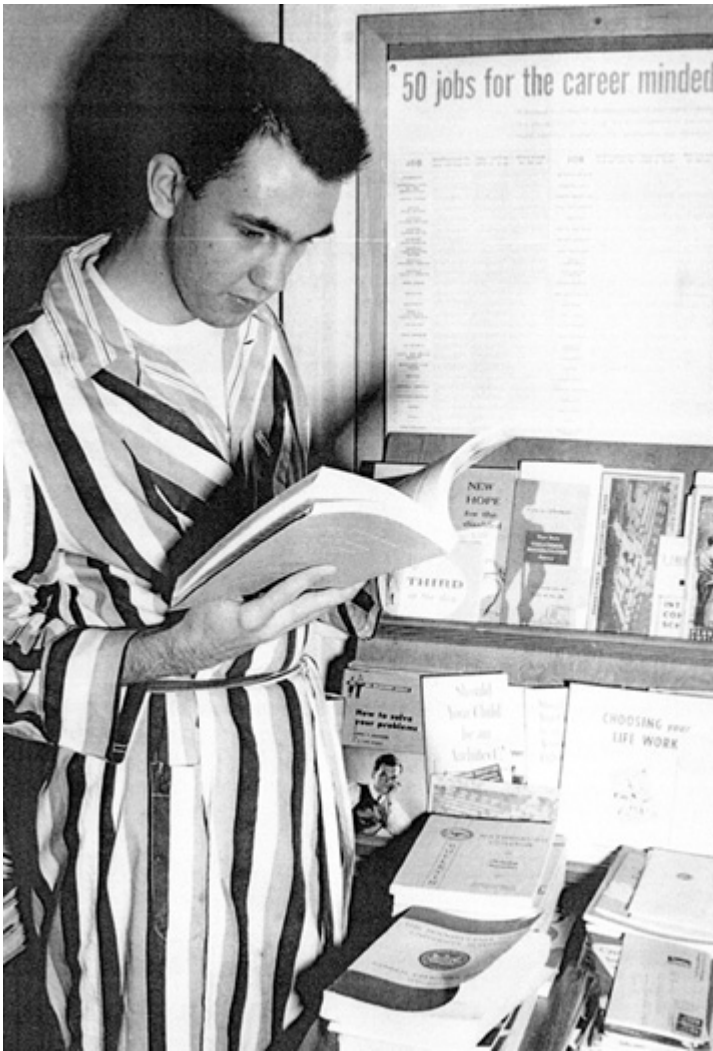
7. Patient Mrs. Mildred Ricco gives Nurse Lenore Feyock a list of musical recordings she would like to have played on the hospital's inter-com system.



9. Patient and instructor in woodwork shop.



8. Mr. Joseph Kokal showing patient Joseph Gerycz how to use a stitching machine to sew a leather loop belt.

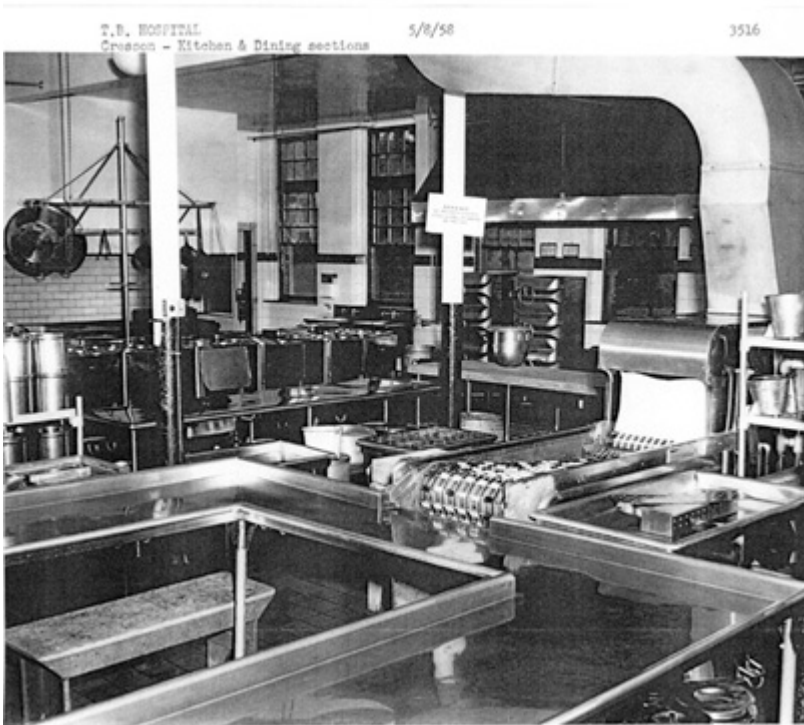


11. Young patient checking on rehabilitation options. TB patients were eligible for state rehabilitation scholarships. I was awarded one that allowed me to attend Penn State and graduate in 1962.

10. Patient puts stole he made on nurse.

Pa Archives 4

The following photos of the san kitchen and dining room areas, kitchen workers and patients were taken in 1958. Dorothy Smay, who worked in the kitchen from 1954 to 1959, has been able to identify most of the kitchen personnel. Thanks, Dot!



1. The kitchen area all stainless steel.



2. l to r: Wilda Smeltzer, Aggie Arnold & Miss McCann the dietitian. (I remember all three of them. Chuck Felton)



3. The staff kitchen.

At left with chef hat is Billy Fisher. The three women partially hidden in the background are (l to r): Eleanor Adams, Mary Lynch and Unknown. The three women in the foreground are (l to r): Anna Marie West, Josephine Stasick and Ann Anderson. Ann Anderson's husband was a patient at the san.



4. The kitchen area. Tile floors for easy cleanup. Coffee pots at left.



5. The san version of meals on wheels. Carts loaded with food trays ready for delivery.



6. Harold Bradley is at the left at the coffee machine. The man in the background with the tall chef's hat just to the right of the white pole is Leo Vermeulen.



T. B. HOSPITAL
Cresson - Kitchen & Dining sections

5/8/58

3519



7. The man at the left is unknown. however, the next three men, l to r, are Vic Vermeulen, Paul McCarty and Leo Vermeulen. Leo & Vic were brothers and head chefs.

8. L to r: Unknown, John Solomon, Leo Vermeulen with tall chef hat, Unknown, Unknown, Vic Vermeulen.

T. B. HOSPITAL
Cresson - Kitchen and Dining section

9/8/58



10. The patients chow line from the serving side.

T. B. HOSPITAL
Cresson - Kitchen and Dining section

5/8/58

3530



9. Nobody went hungry at the san! Gaining weight was a sign of improved health.



11. Another view of the patients chow line. (I spent time in the ward with the elderly gentleman at the left of the photo. Chuck Felton)



12. The employee's dining room.



13. This photo and the one at right show the Staff Dining Room where the doctors, nurses and secretaries took their meals



15. A food serving station located in the ward, not the kitchen area. At the right is Ruth Glass, RN.

14. Another photo of the staff dining room. Amazing what some curtains, chair covers and table cloths will do.



16. I don't remember any names, but I knew the male orderly. He often served us snacks in the evening before we went to bed.



The above photos was sent to me by Dorothy Smay who worked in the kitchen. Shown are Dr. Weest and Dietitian Miss Mabel Whitaker at her going-away ceremony in 1958. Miss Whitaker was leaving the san to work at the Ebensburg State Facility for the mentally challenged.

PA Archives 5

The following 29 photos, taken on 7-15-1960, were provided by the Pa State Archives. The photos document the journey of one patient through the sanatorium, from arrival to going home. There were no notes explaining why these photos were taken or their intended use. All of the people shown were actual patients, staff, nurses and doctors who were at the san. None of the people are identified by name. However, I have added names for several people I recognize, but most of the names were provided by Gail Seabolt of Cresson, Pa, a retired san nurse.

The female patient in all the photos below is believed to be Edith (Edie) Laratonda. She is mentioned on Page 21 of the June 1964 edition of the Skyliner newsletter, which would imply that she was at the san from 1960 to 1964, at a minimum.

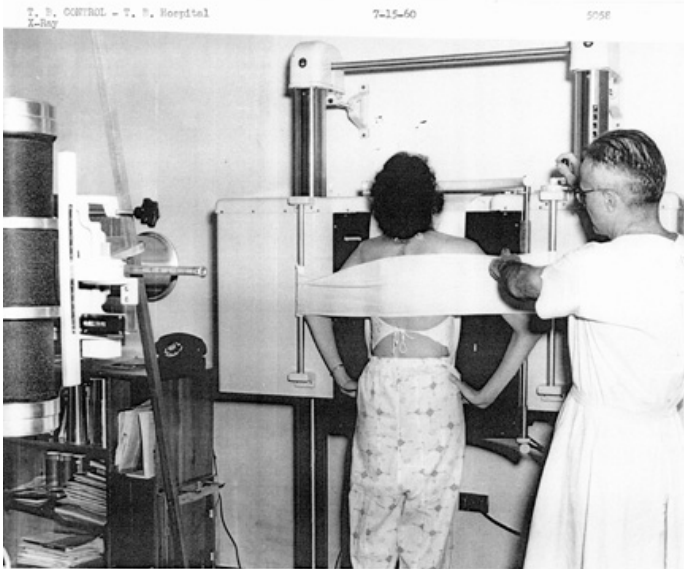
These photos provide a unique visual record of the journey taken by many TB patients from sickness back to health. I am fortunate to be one of them. (Chuck Felton)



1. Patient Edie Laratonda arriving at the san, helped by Guard John Foreman.



2. Doing the paperwork at the Admission Office with Peg Holcolm, RN.



3. Getting an X-ray from Joseph Hadju, Chief X-ray Technician.



4. Initial examination with Dr. James Borland, Senior TB Physician and Helen Lee, LPN.



5. Bedside exam in private room with Dr. Taylor and Ann Donnelly, RN.



6. Bedside exam with Unknown, Ann Donnelly, RN and Dr. Taylor.



7. Lab technician Jimmy Bellas drawing blood.



8. Breakfast at bedside.



9. Listening to the 2-channel radio.



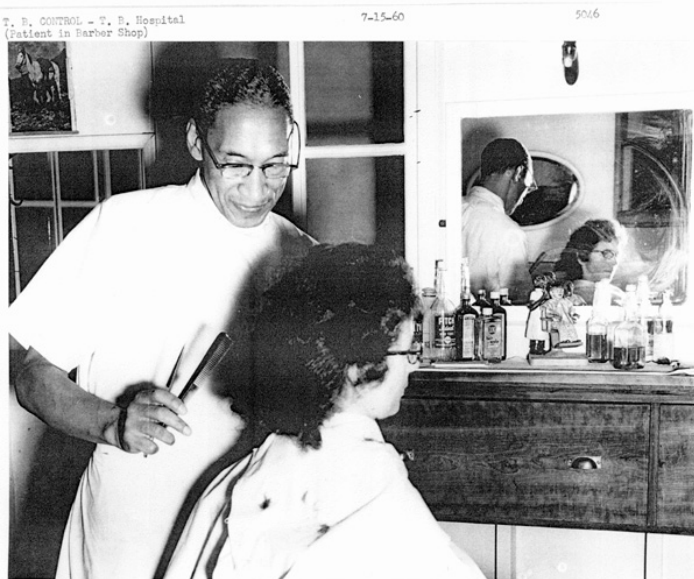
10. The ward layout. At left, Teresa Billetdeaux, Nurse. At right, Mary Kennedy taking orders. May Plaza is in the last bed on the right against the wall.



11. Taking sun on the patio.



12. The recreation room. That's Eleanor McHail on the left in the white uniform.



13. A haircut from barber Dick Spriggs.



14. A consultation with Social Services.



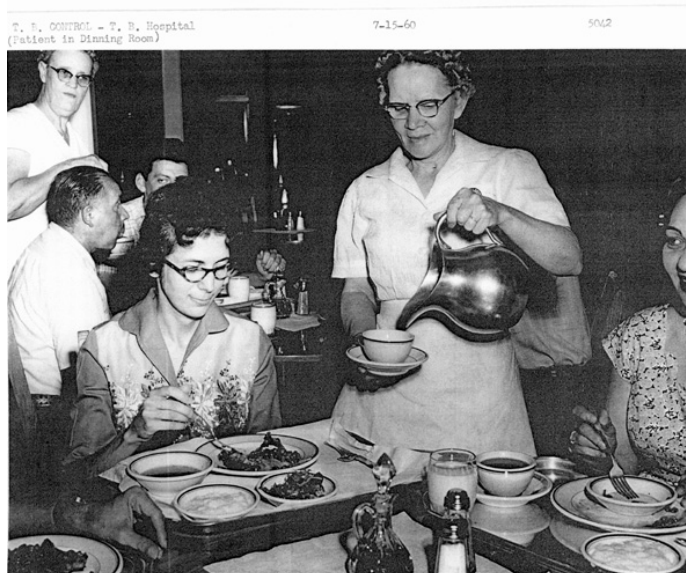
15. Nurse's station. Unknown and Ann Donnelly.



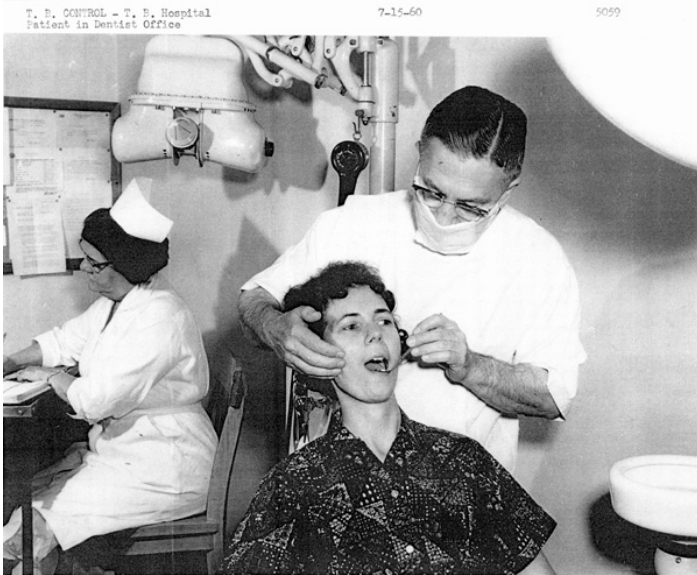
16. Medical team in conference. Joseph Hadju, X-ray Technician, seated at left. Superintendent Dr. Harry Weest standing in front. At right, Mary Crowe taking notes.



17. Nurses & doctors lounge.



18. Eating in the dining room after making "meals".



19. A dental exam given by Dr. John Maury, Dentist. At left is "Bink" Allen, LPN.



20. At the State Branch Cresson Pa. post office. That's George Leslie the Postmaster behind the cage.



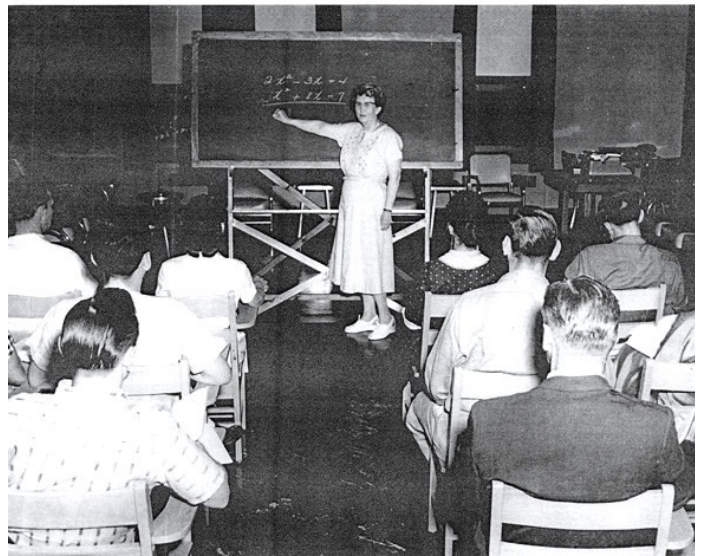
21. Discussing rehabilitation with the Director Richard Acciavatti. (See note below)



22. Receiving typing instructions from Mary Mackereth.



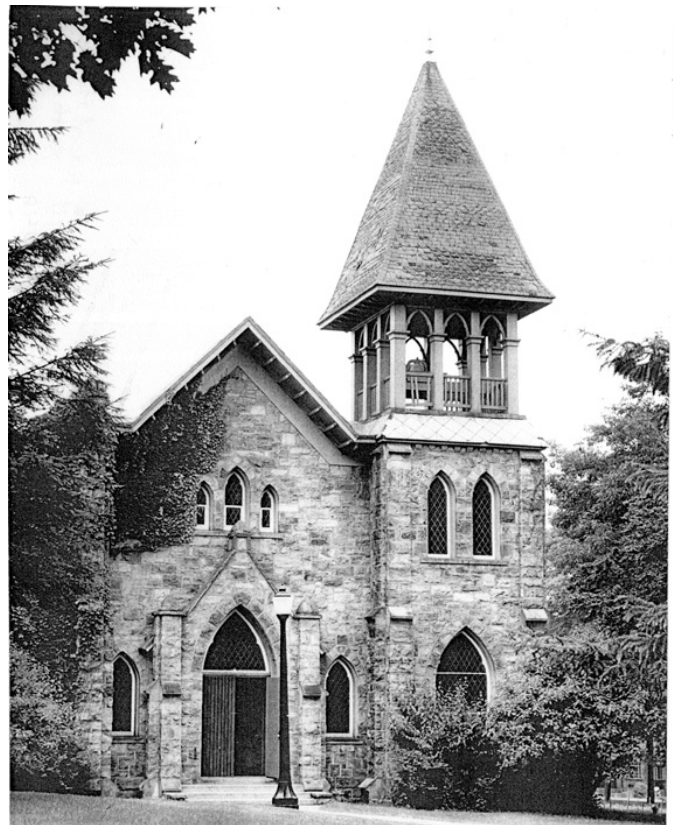
23. Hand tooling leather as part of occupational therapy.



24. Mary Mackereth teaching an algebra class.



25. Having a coke in the canteen.



26. Grace Chapel.



27. Attending Sunday services.



28. Van Tiffany, assistant business manager, serving Communion.



29. The long awaited day, Going Home in style in a 1958 Ford Fairlane. like in #30.

30. A 1958 Ford Fairlane transitioning from hardtop to convertible.



Richard E. Acciavatti after having received his B.S. and M.S. in Psychology and Guidance at Pennsylvania State

University has accepted a position as Director of

Pa Archives 6

The 5 grayscale aerial photos shown below, dated 4-26-1960, were provided by the Pa. State Archives. These photos show how the san complex looked when I was discharged in 1956.

CRESSON SAN AND THE COAL MINE CONNECTION

These 1960 aerial views of the san brought back memories of one of my favorite past-times. When my buddy Jim Hammond and I made meals in 1956 we would often spend an afternoon walking in the woods around the san. We soon discovered that if you started walking toward the east, you would quickly pass through a fairly narrow stand of trees and suddenly come to the edge of an immense ravine running north and south across your path. The ravine was long and deep and seemed all the more startling because it was almost devoid of vegetation. It was like walking out of a forest onto a desolate moonscape.

This moonscape was actually an open strip coal mining operation which had been shut down long before 1956. If you look at photos #1 & #2 you will see the bare patch of land at the top (looking east), which was the strip mine. I believe the neatly laid out black stripes are actually rows of small trees planted in an effort to reduce soil erosion and to restore the natural beauty of the land. Maps #3 & #4 are *current* satellite maps obtained from the TerraServer USA website. On these maps, east is to the right.

The #3 satellite map clearly shows the tree darkened area to the east of the san where the strip mine was located. The #4 topological map shows the position of the san buildings and the strip mine area, shaded brown, to the east. I'm not sure what the purple area indicates.

Photos #1 thru #4 just verify what I already knew about the strip mine. But, in researching the Cresson sanatorium/coal mine connection, I did discover something completely unknown to me. By searching the internet, I discovered that the Pa Dept of Mine Safety keeps maps of all mining operations, even those that have ceased operation. Photo #5 shows a listing from their website showing that the coal mines at Cresson are listed with Map ID #1593 and are designated by the company name of "Cresson Sanatorium". I called the map repository in Uniontown, Pa. and talked with an agent who explained to me that in addition to the strip mine east of the san, there were also mining operation tunnels that ran under the san grounds! They emailed me a section of Map ID #1593, shown in Photo #6. The san buildings can be clearly seen on their map. The slanted lines are where coal mining operations have taken place in the past, running completely under the san grounds.

This information clears up a long standing question I have had since 1956. For as Jim and I walked along the Cresson side of the strip mine ravine, we came to several mine entrances which pointed righted back to the san. They were posted with the usual "Keep Out" and "Warning Danger" and "Do Not Enter" signs in big bold letters. But hey, we were TB survivors and nothing like an old abandoned mine shaft could hurt us. We

entered the mine and walked into them for a short distance, but the available sunlight limited our exploration to about 50 feet. But we always wondered how far back they went toward the san. Now it appears they extended all the way under the san grounds. Another mystery solved through the miracle of the internet. Now I wonder if I can find out when those mining operations took place. *Back to the internet!*

Note: In case you are wondering, I have already contacted the Pa Department of Corrections (DOC) and verified that the existence of the mine tunnels under the present correctional facility is public knowledge. I don't want to be accused of aiding and abetting a jail break. The DOC website for the Cresson Facility is

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/hidden_cresson/11319



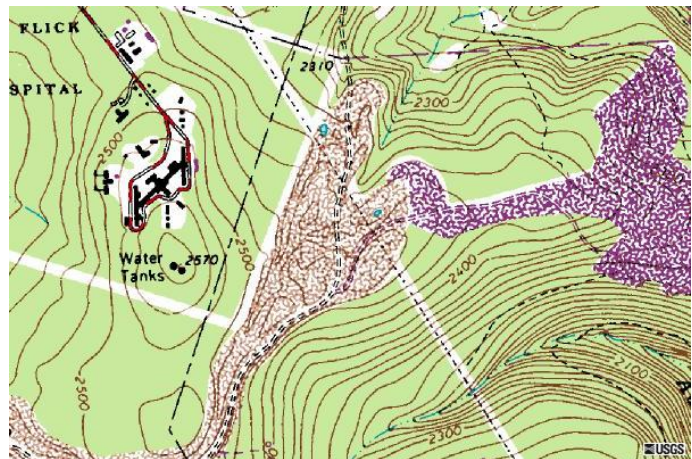
#1 East is at top of photo



#2 East is at top of photo



#3 TerraServer USA photo. East is at right of photo



#4 Topographical Map. East is at right of map

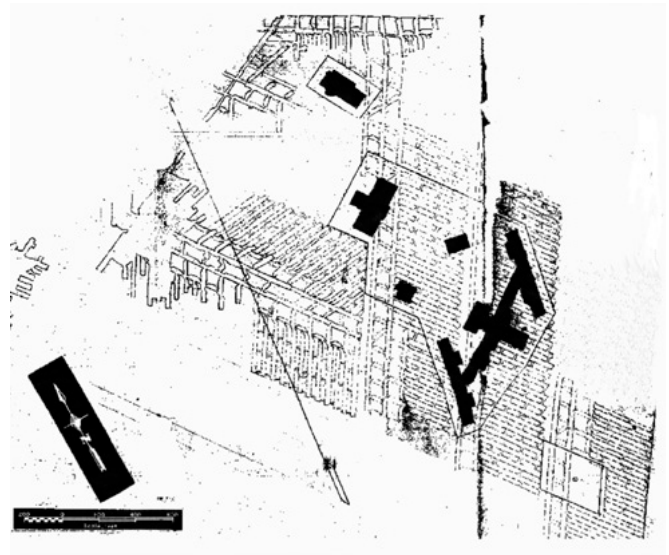
Bituminous Map Repository
Search by Company
displayed alphabetically by mine name

Map ID: 1593 Quad Sheet: Cresso
 Co. Name: Cresson Sanitarium
 Mine Name: Lilly # 3 Mine
 Township: Cresson County: Cambri
 Coal Seam: Lower Kittanning Map Date:
 Shelf Location: F6

Map ID: 1593 Quad Sheet: Cresso
 Co. Name: Cresson Sanitarium
 Mine Name: Lilly # 3 Mine
 Township: Cresson County: Cambri
 Coal Seam: B Map Date:
 Shelf Location: F6

Select A Company

Search also by:
[Mine Name](#) [Coal Seam](#) [County](#) [Township](#) [Quad Sheet](#)



#5 Dept of Mine Safety Map Listing

#6 Map of Cresson Sanatorium Mine. East at right of photo



#7 Depicts the Cresson Mine in 1938 and shows mine shafts and other surface features associated with the underground mine shafts which went beneath the sanatorium grounds. The bare hillside is just a result of clear cutting the trees and is typical of many areas of Pennsylvania in the early 20th Century. The strip mining



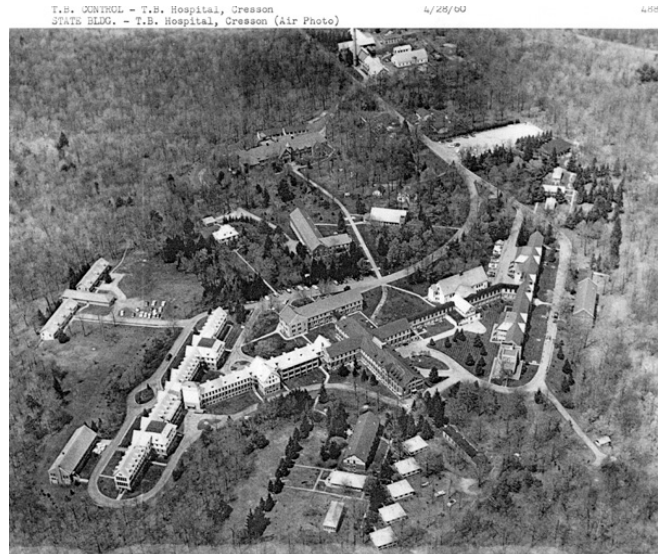
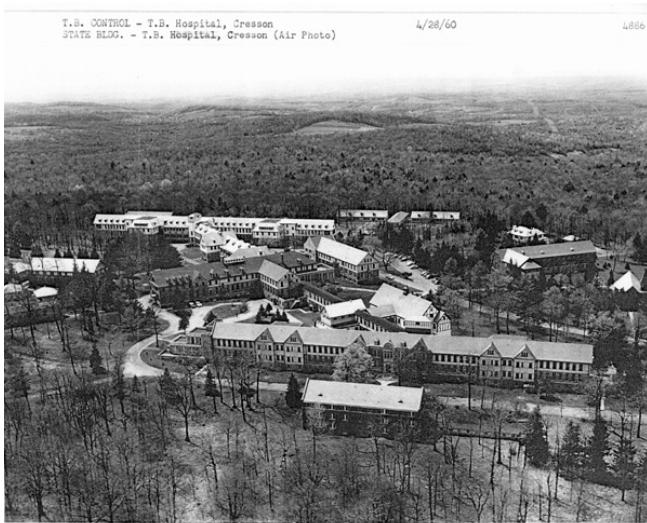
#7.5 This postcard shows the same basic view as Photo #7. The caption on the front reads: "New Coal Mines of Pennsylvania Coal & Coke Corporation, Cresson, PA. One of the Largest in Central Pennsylvania."

operation was probably started in a later decade well after this photo was taken.

The postcard was mailed October 31, 1912 from the Irvona & Cresson Rural Post Office with a one cent stamp to Wilmore, PA.

My thanks to Keith Previc,
Bureau of Mining and Reclamation
Harrisburg, PA 17105

The postcard was published by Study's Drug Store, Cresson, PA.



#9 East is at right of photo.

#8 East is at bottom of photo.



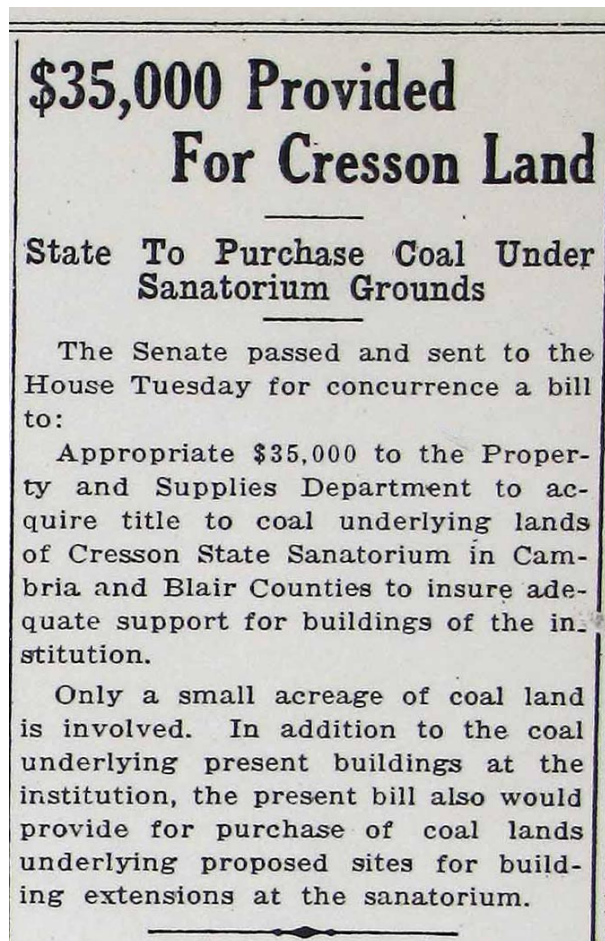
#10. East is to the left.

Cresson Water Tank

There was a large water tank located on the sanatorium grounds just south of the san buildings which was the source of water for the complex. You can see it in photo #10 above at the very top edge. It's also shown in Photos #3 & #4. After we made meals, Jim Hammond and I would occasionally climb the tank for a spectacular view of the san grounds and surrounding countryside.

I found a reference to the water tank in the following book:

History of Cambria County, Pennsylvania
By: John E. Gable
Historical Publishing Company
Topeka-Indianapolis, 1926



#11. The above article appeared in the Cresson Record Newspaper on July 20, 1941 and shows that there were coal shafts running underneath the san grounds and buildings.

Cresson Water Tank

The author describes several of the modern steel watchtowers of the State Department of Forests and Waters which are in Cambria County. In

describing the Chickaree tower in the vicinity of the William Penn Highway near the Cambria/Indiana County line, he mentions that the Cresson Sanatorium water tank, near the crest of the Allegheny Mountain, is a landmark to the east.

Click on the following link to read the full account:

<http://www.onlinebiographies.info/pa/camb/forest.htm>

[NEXT PAGE](#)

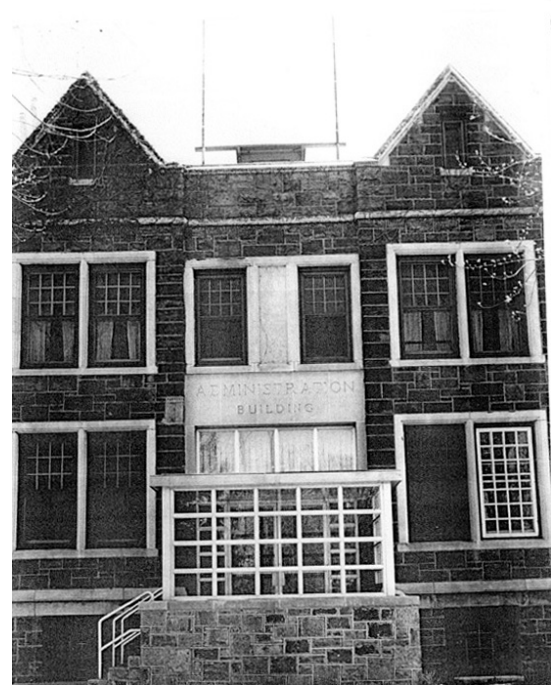
PA Archives 7

Below are a few miscellaneous photos sent by the Pa State Archives.



1. Administration Building entrance before renovation in 1963, looking quite elegant. I don't ever remember seeing the "CS" (for Cresson Sanatorium) on the handrails.

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2. The renovated entrance, having an enclosed porch area. It certainly gave more protection from the weather, but I think it detracted from the overall looks of the entrance.

T. B. GARDNER - T. B. Hospital
View of New Front Door - Cresson

5-3-63

6550



3. The entrance to the san taken in 1961.



4. This may be inside the san looking back at the entrance.



5. Not much is known about these photos except that there was a Slogan Contest in 1963 and the winner is being handed a check. That's Dr. Harry W. Weest on the right in both photos. The winner and the woman are unidentified.



6. I believe the winner may be the same orderly shown in the photo below taken in 1958.



7. Nurses and an orderly getting meal trays ready.