

South Side FACTS

Just How Healthy Are You?

In this newsletter you will find out who were South Side's first doctors and how the hospital business is an important asset on the South Side.

Before There Were Hospitals

In the early days of the South Side, a doctor was called to a sick person's house. Sometimes, people were carried to the doctor's house if they were in a bad accident or needed an operation. Before there were hospitals, the doctor's home was not only his office, but also his operating room!

An early physician on the South

Side was Dr. Nathaniel Bedford. He was educated in Birmingham, England and immigrated to Pittsburgh where he opened his first office. Dr. Bedford was called on to treat Red Pole, a famous Seneca Chief who was taken ill on a visit to Pittsburgh. Dr. Bedford was unable to save Chief Red Pole who, after his death, was buried in the Trinity Church burying ground in downtown Pittsburgh.

Dr. Bedford married Jane Ormsby, who had inherited a large tract of land on the South Side from her father, John Ormsby. Dr. Bedford laid out the borough of Birmingham on that tract of land, now the area between 6th and 17th Streets. Bedford Square, surrounding the old Market House, was named in honor of Dr. Bedford. Bedford's apprentice, Dr. Peter Mowry,

became the first official resident physician of the South Side in 1811. By the 1830s, there were two doctors practicing in Birmingham. By 1857 there were five doctors.

South Side Hospitals

In 1892, three physicians established the first **South Side Hospital** in an old warehouse on Mary Street. The hospital had 30 beds. It was immediately apparent that more beds were badly needed. Therefore, in 1893, a brand new hospital was built and opened at 20th and Mary Streets with a capacity for 70 patients. You can follow the growth of this important medical facility on the timeline on the other side.

OVER →

St. Joseph's Hospital on Carson Street as it looked when completed in 1907. The sculpture over the front door is the only part of the original facade still visible on the building that is now Carson Towers.



South Side Hospital after 1909; the hospital steps face 20th Street. The Oliver Annex is to the left of the main building. These buildings were demolished in the early 1980s.



The roof garden of the South Side Hospital is shown in this photo of c. 1910. A bridge connects the hospital to the Oliver Annex.

Today, **UPMC South Side**, located at 2000 Mary Street, is a community hospital. It serves the South Side Flats and Slopes, Wards 29, 30 and 32 of the City of Pittsburgh, and the boroughs of Mt. Oliver, Brentwood, Whitehall, and Baldwin. The hospital employs about 600 people. About 300 of those employees live in areas served by the hospital!

St. Joseph's Hospital was established in 1902 by the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was located in an old homestead in the 2000 block of East Carson Street. John T. Comes, an architect who is best known for his designs for Pittsburgh area churches, was hired to design a new six-story hospital building. It opened in 1907. St. Joseph's Hospital remained in operation on the South Side for 75 years. The building now has a new name and a new mission. It is Carson Towers, an assisted living facility for older adults — most of whom are long-time South Side residents!



UPMC South Side, as it looks today.

Questions

1. Who was one of the first doctors on the South Side? (He also laid out the borough of Birmingham.)

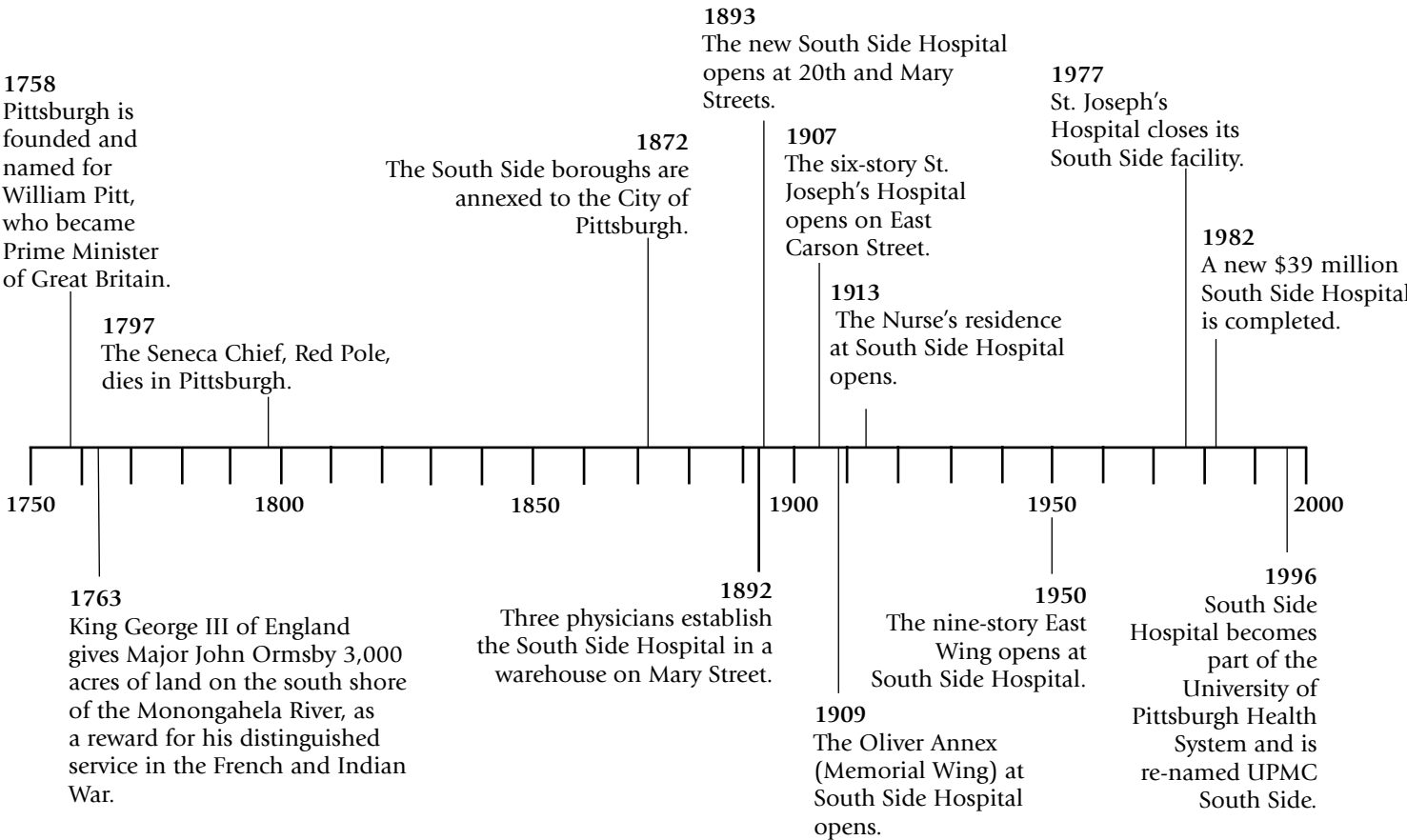
2. For whom is Bedford Square named?

3. How many years ago was the first South Side Hospital established?

4. How many beds did the first South Side Hospital have?

5. How many stories tall was St. Joseph's Hospital?

6. When did St. Joseph's Hospital close?



This fact sheet is based on research by Megan Heilmann, an intern with the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. The fact sheet was designed for students participating in educational programs offered through the Neighborhood Assistance Program/Comprehensive Service Program. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development sponsors the Neighborhood Assistance Program in partnership with the South Side Local Development Company and PNC Bank. For details call the SSLDC at 412-481-0651.



Help us protect the places that make Pittsburgh home.