



**The Restoration of The Hickman Friends Senior Living Community
The Hickman Building
Case for Support
July 2021**

Mission and Culture

The Hickman is a personal care senior living community located in the heart of West Chester, Pennsylvania where, for 130 years, Quaker principles have guided our commitment to residents. The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) believes that each human life has value and no individual's worth is based on resources or status in life. The conviction that there is "that of God in every person" has led to more than 350 years of Quaker action to promote equality and respect for the dignity of all people. At The Hickman, we are committed to making this heritage a part of our daily community life. As such, we seek to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for residents, their families, staff, and volunteers, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, ability, or sexual orientation. While open to all, The Hickman primarily serves people of modest means, as its founders intended. Individualized, affordable care is the foundation of The Hickman's mission to older adults who seek a safe and affordable community living environment.

Introduction

The Hickman Friends Community must renovate The Hickman building to bring the infrastructure to current municipal codes and remain compliant with regulatory bodies while also meeting the needs and expectations of residents. An initial evaluation of the entire building is complete and while the external structure is sound, a full mechanical, electrical and plumbing evaluation, completed by Moore Mechanical Service, Inc., revealed the internal infrastructure needs large-scale repair. Specifically, the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems need to be removed, replaced, upgraded, and reconfigured. The very rough estimate for these repairs and renovations is approximately four million dollars (\$4 million).

History

In 1891, area residents, Sallie Sharpless and Lydia Hall predicted, with amazing foresight, that ultimately there would be a need to care for older, single women who had no families to support them. Their vision resulted in the first Friends' boarding home in West Chester which provided room, board, and personal care service for older individuals. The level of need was even greater than expected and one building became two buildings and then three. The third



building-The Hickman Building- was the largest of the three and was built in 1936. In the 1960's, the original two 90-year-old buildings were renovated to keep up with modern standards and physically joined together to form the Sharpless-Hall Building.

As the years passed, The Hickman experienced changes now common in the aging services sector. Residents, who had been arriving in their sixties, were now coming to The Hickman much later in life, and, consequently, their need for care, especially memory care, was more significant. In addition, the length of stay was far shorter-usually three to four years rather than decades. It became apparent, giving the increased physical and cognitive fragility of residents, Sharpless-Hall could no longer be repaired sufficient to accommodate residents' needs while also meeting the needs of statewide safety regulations.

A capital and private funding campaign was launched to support the construction of the Anna T. Jeanes Building, which now sits on the site of the old Sharpless-Hall structure. The Jeanes building opened in 2018 and houses a 22-bed memory care neighborhood along with 52 personal care units. Today, as a licensed person care home, The Hickman Community provides individualized care to all residents. The community includes the Anna T. Jeanes building and The Hickman building. Together, these buildings have the capacity to serve 125 residents.

The capital project currently being developed is the renovation and restoration of the Hickman building located at 400 North Walnut Street, West Chester, Pa. The need for affordable senior housing is increasing predictably. By 2030, all baby boomers will be older than age 65. This will expand the size of the older population so that 1 in every 5 residents will be retirement age.¹ The corollary effect is the increased demand for senior living that will continue to be heavy for the next 20 years² as people are living longer.

A recent Pew survey finds that the boomers' express some glum assessments about their lives overall. The fear is punctuated by relatively high levels of anxiety about their personal finances. Some 55% say it is likely that their incomes will not keep up with the cost of living over the next year. That majority makes them the exception among all adults. Only four-in-ten younger Americans (44%) or older ones (43%) have that concern.³

¹ <https://www.census.gov/newroom/press-releases/2018/cb-41-population-projections.html>. March 2018.

² <https://www.forbes.com/sites/foresrealestatecouncil/2020/11/02/sup>

³ <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2008/06/25/baby-boomers-the-gloomiest-generation/>



The Hickman as Community Leader

In fulfilling its mission to serve seniors of modest means, The Hickman has been a presence and played an important role in the greater West Chester area for more than 130 years, serving more than one thousand individuals from 1891 to 2021. The generosity of donors and the faithful stewardship of resources by its leadership have meant that throughout its history, no one has been asked to leave The Hickman because of an inability to pay. We intentionally budget funds each year to provide some level of financial assistance to those in need. We work in close partnership with residents and family members to ensure that fees alone are never a barrier to remaining at the community. Since 2003, we have provided over \$2 million in financial assistance to residents.

The Hickman has long been a welcoming and inclusive environment. As a small, single site facility we have been able to include residents who may not be as comfortable in a larger more standardized community. This environment of warmth and hospitality is evident in the diversity of people who are drawn to our facility.

There are individuals like Ernie, who was born blind and was well known for selling newspapers outside the Courthouse in West Chester. Active with the NAACP and Lions Club, Ernie appreciated the inclusiveness of The Hickman. When he came to The Hickman, his family knew he would be cared for in familiar surroundings for the rest of his life. He lived here for many years, receiving financial assistance.

We also remember Naomi who was misdiagnosed as a child to be intellectually and developmentally challenged. She spent many years in institutions before accurately being diagnosed as dyslexic. When she moved to The Hickman, she appreciated being fully accepted as a valuable member of a community for the first time. She learned to weave and volunteered whenever she was able. Her great joy was calling members of her synagogue on their birthday. This simple service regained Naomi's sense of purpose and offered a quality of life she had not known.

Ruth resided with us from 2013-2019. Ruth had no children or husband. The Hickman community became her family providing both compassionate care and financial support, allowing Ruth to live out her days with dignity. Without external support, The Hickman fulfilled its pledge to Ruth fulfilling our mission to honor all residents regardless of their ability to pay. Ruth received a traditional Quaker style funeral including an epitaph, in her honor, placed in our garden.



One more widely known resident is Anne, a pillar of the Quaker community. For more than 15 years, she lived at The Hickman, championing issues of peace, social justice, and environmental stewardship. She was one of the first residents to embrace the computers provided by The Hickman to spark her human relations agenda; she improved the circumstances at her Hickman home and the greater community.

Community Impact

The Hickman positively impacts the community that surrounds it. The Hickman building sits on the grounds of the historic Quaker Block, located in the heart of the Borough of West Chester, and engages with its neighbors formally and informally. The West Chester Friends School and the West Chester Friends Meeting share intergenerational activities with Hickman residents. Students and residents meet regularly to share stories, discuss current events (older students), share skills, and play games. The Hickman residents gain an appreciation for both the joys and challenges of being a young person in today's world, while the children gain a greater appreciation for the wisdom of age. The Hickman also partners with West Chester University, Harcum College and other technical colleges, hosting internships and hands-on experiences that are invaluable to future nurses, therapists, and geriatric specialties. Additionally, The Hickman was a participant in a case study conducted by West Chest University and designed to promote West Chester as a livable community defined as one that is safe, secure and offers a bevy of lifestyle choices.

The benefits of our services are not limited to our own residents. In 2010, we joined with Penrose Development Corporation to build a 64-apartment, affordable senior community in the Borough of West Chester. Through support and encouragement from local leaders and elected representatives, and with critical financial support from the Commonwealth, we were able to undertake the tear-down and rebuilding the Hall Building, turning the former hospital, then county government building into the Mary Taylor House. This award -winning property was the first U.S. Green Building Council Certified Level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building in Chester County in recognition of its environmentally sound construction.

Our overall financial position is stable thanks to endowments and philanthropy of many. As a small independent personal care facility, The Hickman is a careful steward of its resources. We have a strong history of receiving and managing philanthropic gifts that have supported our mission while fully complying with the desires of the donors. Our name is based upon a large bequest made in the 1930's by Nathaniel Hickman that provided construction funding and an endowment for the current Hickman building. Nonetheless, we recognize that we operate at a very close margin as costs continually increase disproportionately to revenue.



Our geographic market features many other personal care facilities. However, these facilities are often out of reach of our target resident. Alternate homes charge an exorbitant front end “buy-in “and monthly fees are more expensive than The Hickman’s in large part because added amenities drive costs. Swimming pools, saunas, cafes, salons, and spas are enticing but often sit empty in reality. Our goal is to attract new residents with a structurally sound, attractive, and well-maintained building that provides basic and simple comforts without burdensome fees.

The Hickman’s Sustainability Needs

An evaluation by Lenhart Rogers Architectural Firm and Moore Mechanical cites the following immediate needs.

1. Overhaul of heating, venting and air condition system
2. Replacement of galvanized water lines, leaking copper hot water lines, drain lines of multiple types
3. Removal of steam piping
4. Electrical overhaul to include comprehensive repair and /or replacement of multiple panels, service cables, junction boxes, covers for 240 bolt outlets
5. Reconfiguring rooms to be compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act

While we have been excellent stewards in maintaining, general repairs cannot address the broader issues of accessibility, efficiency of space and environmental changes in the constructing requirements. A complete renovation of these systems will assure The Hickman remains a relevant, reliable, and safe alternative for West Chester’s seniors and others seeking our simple comforts.

The newly restored Hickman Building is necessary not only to meet the changing needs of current and future Hickman residents, but also to ensure the Hickman’s long-term financial health. We remain committed to our mission of providing high-quality, person-centered care for seniors of modest means.

Betsey Stratton, Chair, Board of Directors shares that “The Hickman’s sense of responsibility for the seniors of modest means is rooted in the Quaker value of taking up the cause of the poor and wronged. As a Quaker organization, we believe in ‘that of God in all of us’ and this belief prompts actions. Social justice includes protecting the rights of seniors to experience dignity in their final years.”



So, like the leaders that came before us: Lydia Hall, Anna T. Jeanes, Sallie A. Sharpless, Nathaniel G. Hickman and Samuel G. Hickman, we push on with the heartfelt mission to provide safe, humble provisions for senior of modest means.

Annual Report 1893

Since our last annual report, activity and encouragement has marked the progress of "The Home" and it is with grateful hearts that we remember that an institution that only so lately was an experiment has now gained for itself a permanency that will no longer admit of a doubt as to its future continuance and usefulness.