1938: Alamosa Community Hospital built in the shape of the letter Y

Entering from Crestone Avenue, Alamosans were gratified that finally the hospital was being removed from the downtown area and was being placed in a much larger, modern, fireproof structure in relatively quiet surroundings near the western edge of town.

1945: War creates staff shortage

During WW II in the 1940’s, the hospital was frequently overtaxed. “The hospital scarcely could have remained open without the well-trained nurses’ aides who volunteered so many hours of service without compensation. The Lutheran Ladies Aid played a vital role in keeping the hospital supplied during a time of scarcity. The ladies served meals, making cheese, shoveling snow, cooking, etc. for the kitchen so the nurses didn’t have to. Mrs. Katie Graf was the chief wren, but all of the Lutheran ladies volunteered countless hours of making towels, bandages, gowns, and beds, and in repairing sheets.” (1-2)

1946: Elton A. Reese of Monte Vista begins 35 years as hospital administrator

Mr. Reese understood the growing health care concerns for the SLV and had a vision and worked tirelessly to find the funds for capital improvements. Reese received his B.S. degree from Concordia College in Seward, NE and taught school in Monte Vista before entering the U.S. Army. He began with the Alamosa Community Hospital in 1946 as the “Business Manager” in charge of hospital administration. His title changed to Superintendent, Administrator and finally served as the Executive Director of the board until his retirement. He also served as the president of the Colorado Hospital Association.

1949: Dental staff organized at hospital

1950: Dr. David Labouisse becomes hospital’s first resident radiologist

1953: Completion of New “OB Wing”

With the completion of the new “OB wing” twelve mothers and babies could be accommodated in excellent surroundings and for the first time the hospital had a separate labor room.

1953: Addition to Hospital includes ER, X-Ray and Laboratory

Built by local contractor George VanIwaarden, the latest addition was completed and “now Alamosa community Hospital could offer for the first time an adequate emergency room, laboratory, and an x-ray section.” (1)

1957: Hospital Volunteers through Girl Scouts

A chaplaincy program was instituted, with Reverend Norman HermSD, Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, as the hospital’s first chaplain. It was dropped in 1975 and re-instituted in 1981 and has been voluntarily staffed by community ministers since then.

1959: Chaplaincy Program instituted

A chaplaincy program was instituted, with Reverend Norman HermSD, Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, as the hospital’s first chaplain. It was dropped in 1975 and re-instituted in 1981 and has been voluntarily staffed by community ministers since then. 1959: Trinity Lutheran Church donated their alter in 1960 when the church moved and has been in the hospital’s chapel since then.

1959: Reese stressed need for additions to hospital

Due to overcrowding conditions and nursing services that were unsatisfactory, additions and upgrades were made resulting in a “modern 26-patient nursing wing” new electrical and toilet was added as well as remodeling of the surgical area. “For the comfort of patients and hospital personnel, all rooms, both new and old, were equipped with individual thermostats. The striking 26-bed wing contained six private rooms, three 5-bed wards, and one 5-bed pediatric ward. Alamosa Community Hospital now had 72 beds.” (1)

1963: Conejos County Hospital Established

The idea of the Conejos County Hospital began with nearly 15 years of effort. The hospital committee was formed back in 1948 and worked tirelessly with citizens, businessmen and professional people of Conejos County, using their own funds to establish contacts and resources for the project. The hospital project was formally announced in early 1963, and the land was purchased from the Valdez Brothers of La Jara.

1963: Hospital Dedication

On April 21, 1963, the hospital was dedicated and the conejos county hospital association was formed to operate the new hospital.

1965: Hospital Volunteers through Girl Scouts

1968: Margaret Jones is born, RN, reflected about working on call. She recalls, “There was severe lack of supplies. We used Indian cornmeal for bread. We used lemon juice for soap. And yes, it was a naked basin in the middle of the night for the convenience of the patient. We were just 19-year-olds; we took the call. I am so thankful to have those nurses.”

1972 beds. “(1)"