

Only a handful of true Wildwoodians can say. . .

“I WAS BORN AT HATTIE LONG’S!”



Mrs. LONG'S MATERNITY HOME

by Ashley Goodsell



Mrs. Hattie Long's Birth Records dated between the years of 1926 to 1946

Photos courtesy of Wildwood Historic Museum

In the early 1900's, maternity homes were an easier, more comfortable, convenient way to deliver your baby and in Wildwood, there were two popular places for this! The first home, in which around 6,000 babies were delivered, was Dr. Margaret Mace's hospital in North Wildwood. The second home, located on Montgomery Avenue in Wildwood was also a very special maternity home that was run by mid-wife, Mrs. Hattie Long.

After Mr. Long passed away in 1923, Mrs. Long started the maternity home in 1926 in order to make a living for herself. The maternity home was successful for twenty years as four or more doctors worked along side of Mrs. Long to keep the business going. Mrs. Long and her team of doctors delivered around 515 babies during that time, nine of which were her own. Unfortunately, only seven of the nine Long babies survived;

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Cathy Nesbitt Smith March 25, 1944 | 10. Maureen Cullen Manlandro Mar. 14, 1947 |
| 2. Patricia Nesbitt Nagel Oct. 12, 1946 | 11. Rita Cullen Canning April 3, 1943 |
| 3. Carol Tozour Lechner Dec. 14, 1941 | 12. Inge Friesenborg Laine Aug. 2, 1939 |
| 4. Jack Dennison April 20, 1933 | 13. Dave Grasso Jan. 20, 1927 |
| 5. Edwin Nesbitt Oct. 2, 1940 | 14. Susan Sheldon Luskin Nov. 26, 1946 |
| 6. Rex Allen Garrison Dec. 14, 1947 | 15. Eleanor Carlson Carr Dec. 2, 1934 |
| 7. Irma Friesenborg McVey Sept. 9, 1935 | 16. Karla Svard Frederick April 17, 1940 |
| (See story on Capt. Friesenborg at | 17. John Carr Sept. 14, 1934 |
| www.sunbythesea.com in archives) | 18. Bill Callahan March 17, 1930 |
| 8. Ann Gaskill Rea Feb. 1, 1938 | 19. John M. Long Aug. 5, 1929 |
| 9. Paul W. Dare Feb. 16, 1949 | John is the grandson of Hattie Long |

however, the oldest daughter of Mrs. Long grew up helping with the home and soon became a very helpful aid for Hattie Long during the birth processes.

John Long, grandson to Mrs. Long, was born on August 5, 1929, and was the only guy born into the Long family during that time—"he is the last of the Long's". John has visited the maternity home a couple times after the maternity home was no longer; his cousin Dotty lived there after Hattie Long passed away. There was also a small house attached to the back of the maternity home in which John's parents lived at the time as well.

The maternity home itself still stands in Wildwood. It still has the long, enclosed porch in which the babies were held after they were born. This was a three bedroom house, and through the duration that the house was a maternity home, the bedrooms' upstairs were the sites of where the mothers stayed during the procedures. Mrs. Long made the living room into a bedroom for herself to make all of her guests comfortable.

Although this home was resold numerous times ever since it was a successful maternity home in 1926, the home still stands on Montgomery Avenue filled with many memories. At a photo gathering for this maternity home in July, 2010, nineteen people that were born in the home showed up to capture the memory for a lifetime. Look for 2011 date in early spring.

Ashley Goodsell is going into her senior year as a Journalism Major at Point Park University, where she also plays for their soccer team. She plans on attending graduate school and coaching soccer upon graduation. Look for more of Ashley's work in the Summer 2011. Best wishes for a great school year!