

# PROFILES

## IN HEALTHCARE MARKETING

The Latest Trends in Healthcare Marketing, Promotion and Public Relations  
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Marketing

# Historic photos become hospital's PR, marketing tool

by Tom Rees

**A**n exhibit of historic perception stands to become a powerful public relations and marketing tool for Washington Hospital in Fremont, Calif.

A permanent exhibit of 145 photographs that chronicles the history of the Alameda County region east of San Francisco Bay was unveiled last May when the hospital opened its new Washington West facility amid celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the Washington Township Health Care District that operates the hospital.

The district commissioned the exhibit as a gift to the community, according to Nancy Farber, CEO of the Township Healthcare System. The exhibit was compiled and the photos restored by photo artist Bennett Hall, owner of Bennett Hall Images in San Francisco. Hall created similar exhibits for El Camino Hospital in Mountain View and neighboring San Jose Health Center, south of San Francisco.



▲ Charlie Chaplin perfected the "Tramp" at Essanay Studios in Niles, Calif. The photo is one that was hand tinted and digitally enhanced by Bennett Hall for the Washington West photo exhibit.

"Washington Township Healthcare System wanted an exhibit which would be both informative and docu-

### VITAL STATS

**Program type:**  
Community relations/public relations tool

**Program dates:**  
Part of the hospital's anniversary celebration.  
Began May 16  
Ongoing

**Facility size:**  
308 beds

**Facility type:**  
Acute care general hospital

**Institution:**  
Washington Hospital/Washington Township Healthcare System  
2000 Mowry Ave.  
Fremont, CA 94538

**Contact:**  
Frank Smith  
Manager of community relations

**Phone:**  
(510) 791-3417

**Fax:**  
((510) 745-6427

**Photographic artist:**  
Bennett Hall Images  
41 Powell St.  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Results:**  
About 1,100 people visited the exhibit and the new hospital wing

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ment its commitment to the community," Hall said. "As a community health care district, the hospital wouldn't exist today but for the tireless efforts of post-war community leaders. This exhibit shows patients, visitors and employees alike that the district cares about the people it serves. Many of the photographs in the exhibit were previously not available for public viewing, or only available at remote sites," he added.

"We're very excited about this project, which brings the history of the Tri-City region to our residents," Farber said. Until the exhibit opened in Washington West, the photos were

only accessible to people willing to visit various sites displaying them. Since the exhibit opened, many residents have made special trips to the hospital to view the images.

Farber said the exhibit would not have been possible without the generosity of the community in obtaining the images. "All of our images came from dozens of sources and we're extremely appreciative to our surrounding community," she said.

Washington Hospital Healthcare System serves the residents of Fremont, Newark, Union City, and part of South Hayward, Calif., encompassing approximately 124 square miles of Alameda County.

The district's population is nearly 300,000.

Washington Hospital, a 308-bed, acute-care general hospital, is the flagship of the health care system that includes four clinics, radiation oncology center, outpatient surgery center, outpatient rehabilitation center, and an outpatient catheterization laboratory.

Washington West, a completely remodeled department store, houses expanded facilities, such as Washington Hospital's Fremont Clinic, a new Community Health Resource Library and a free Health Insurance Information Service.

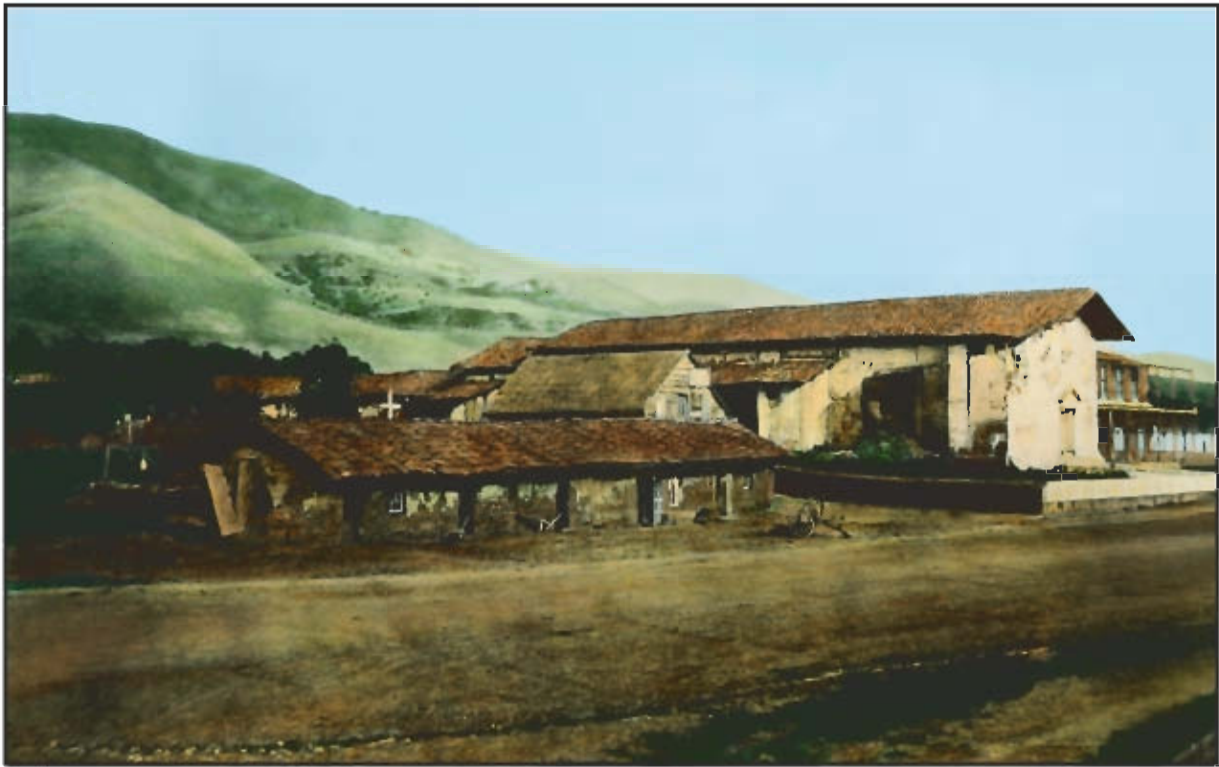
The photo exhibit, hung in the public areas of Washington West,



▲ Bennett Hall Images emblem design for the Washington Township Hospital District.



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▲ Mission San Jose, established in 1797. The photo, restored by Bennett Hall, is one of 145 historic photos in the Washington West exhibit.



▲ Prospective buyers tour the grounds of the California Nursery Co., the company responsible for landscaping William Randolph Hearst's castle. The photo is part of the Washington West exhibit.

complements the services of the library and the insurance information service. In effect, it transforms the medical complex into a historical museum of sorts. Each period of local history has its own space. In addition to exhibits recalling Native American history and the hospital's development, the photos depict some of the earliest European settlers and Mexican ranches, subsequent struggles for land ownership and the battle for water rights. Other segments of the exhibit cover nearly forgotten chapters of the region's history: the early motion picture industry in the Niles, Calif., region, Leland Stanford and his local winery, the nursery that landscaped

Hearst's castle and the factory that built San Francisco's legendary cable cars. Each photo carries a legend that explains the photo's significance.

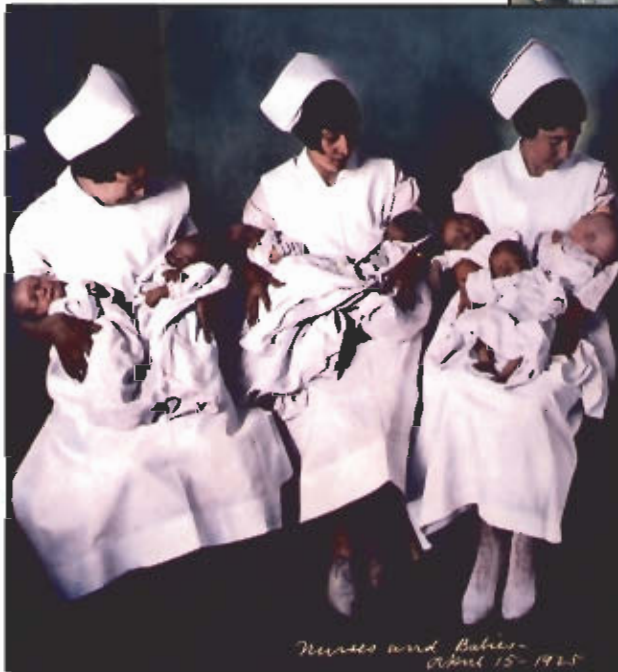
The rare, and sometimes one-of-a-kind photos, were reproduced on fiber-based photographic paper. Bennett Hall then hand-tinted each photo to recreate what the original photographer saw. Following the tinting process, the images were scanned by state-of-the-art computer technology and digitally printed to the size needed for the display.

The exhibit already has been the subject of extensive news media coverage, including a 30-minute cable television show and the health

system's community newsletter that circulates to nearly 70,000 residents. It is featured in marketing collateral materials and is utilized to help draw people to free screenings, immunization clinics and open houses.

"We also plan to produce brochures and maps specific to the exhibit, develop a tour program with trained docents, develop a fund-raiser based on a book featuring the artwork, feature the images on our web site ([www.whhs.com](http://www.whhs.com)) and fully develop joint programs with local schools for history class tours," said Frank Smith, community relations manager for the health care system. ■

▶ A nurse surveys the then-virgin landscape from a window in Washington Hospital in Fremont, Calif., circa 1960.



◀ Bennett Hall Images supplied artwork, such as this 1925 photo, for San Jose, Calif., Health Center's Greenhouse Cafe. The goal was to communicate the hospital's tradition of caring to the public.