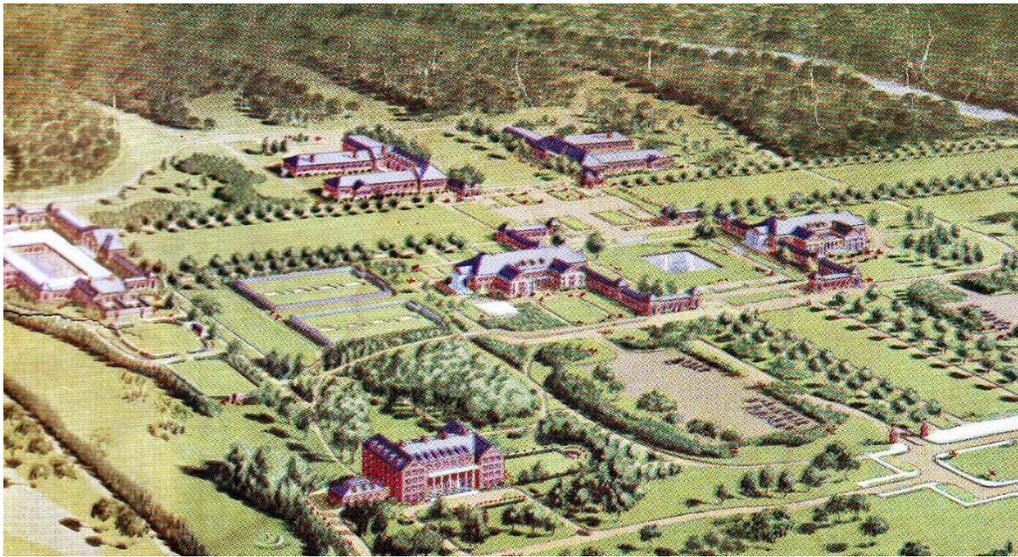


## This week in Saratoga County History

### “A Place of Healing for all the World”

Submitted by Mary Ann Fitzgerald August 10, 2022

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*Architectural rendering - Saratoga Spa Guide Book 1935*

*“The Spa is new in every sense of the word. In addition to new equipment, new buildings and new treatments, it presents a new conception of the treatment of disease—the conception of health and recreation and enjoyment while finding that health. It is a place where the patient, by the very life that teems around him, will be made to forget he is ill.” Pierrepont B. Noyes, President, Saratoga Springs Authority. Address of Welcome. The Saratogian July 26, 1935.*

The Saratogian issued a special “Spa Opening Edition,” celebrating the Saratoga Spa which was created by the State of New York to make available to its own people, and to the people of every other state and country, the healing virtues of the waters that flow from the springs. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, throughout his years in public office, had displayed great interest in the success of Saratoga Spa. As Governor, he appointed the Saratoga Springs Commission, under whose guidance the Spa was developed. Under his administration as President, a Reconstruction Finance

Corporation loan of \$3,200,000 was granted to enable the prompt completion of the health center. The Spa was ready for a formal opening in July 1935.

The "Know your Spa" campaign was launched in May, in anticipation of the opening. Members of the Junior Chamber of Commerce acted as guides to take hundreds of visitors and Saratogians on inspection tours of the various buildings at the Saratoga Spa including the Roosevelt Baths, the Golf House, the Bottling Plant, the swimming pool, and The Simon Baruch Research Institute. Although not ready for opening day, the Hall of Springs presented a beautiful area with fountains from which waters of Geysers, Hathorn and Coesa Springs would flow for all to enjoy.

The City of Saratoga Springs appropriated \$10,000 to finance a fitting celebration. Residents of the city, under the chairmanship of Isaac J. Burdick, worked feverishly for several days to stage the city's observance of the opening of the new Saratoga Spa by the Saratoga Springs Authority. A huge banner was hung across Broadway and billboards leading to the city welcomed guests. Signs displaying the Seal of the State of New York in red with the spouting spring in the background were placed at entrances to the city. Mayor Henry J. Schrade, Jr. announced that there would be a half-day business holiday on Friday, July 26, for the opening ceremony.

A program of community events spread over four days, attracted thousands of visitors. Saratoga Springs thronged with medical men, legislators and citizens gathered for observances. The festival began on Thursday evening, July 25<sup>th</sup>, with a band concert in Congress Park. The next day the city turned out en masse in a motorcade to the spa which formed on North Broadway, under the direction of Louis W. Noland and members of the Rotary Club. The formal opening ceremonies of America's first spa, in the European sense of the word, took place on the esplanade between the Hall of Springs and the Simon Baruch Research Institute. Charles E. Morris, founder of the Saratoga City Band, in charge of the music for the celebration, played a concert before the ceremony and various selections between addresses and at the end of the ceremony as well.

Pierrepont B. Noyes, president of the Saratoga Springs Authority, presided at the opening, and made a brief address of welcome to the distinguished guests. The ceremony featured speeches by Governor Herbert H. Lehman, and Dr. Frederic E. Sondern, President of the State Medical Society. In his address, George Foster Peabody, only surviving member of the original Saratoga Springs Commission traced the development of the Spa from its start in 1910. The program was broadcast over a hookup of National Broadcasting stations serving the entire eastern half of the United States.

Later that evening a street parade formed on North Broadway, band concerts by the Saratoga City Band and the Union Fire Co. 2 Band of Ballston Spa, were held on the lawn of the Presbyterian Church on Broadway and in Congress Park. Music for street

dancing was provided by the Allen Thomas, and Jack Davis orchestras on the porches of the Rip Van Dam Hotel and the United States Hotel.

On Saturday, July 27, Dr. Ray Waldron Pettengill, lead a motorcade to the Saratoga Battlefield, from Union Avenue. The Spa City Band opened their morning concert with an original composition, "The New Saratoga" composed by Charles E. Morris. The Rev. Irving G. Rouillard and the Rev. Reuben H. Claxin were in charge of the Sunday evening services, with the Saratoga City Band giving a sacred concert preceding the union vesper service. The Invocation was given by Reverend Mahlon C. Tunison, Pastor of the First Baptist Church;

Alexander F. Walsh, president, and members of the Lions Club, were in charge of entertainment for the closing program. A pageant, under the direction of Mrs. George S. Andrews, "Early Chapters in Saratoga History," was presented in Congress Park, with Troop 3 Boy Scouts distributing programs. Other musical groups providing entertainment for the three-day event included: the Matt Lee Hook & Ladder Company of Ballston Spa; the Saratoga Springs High School Drum Corps and the Ballston-Mechanicville American Legion Drum Corps. A final Band Concert in Congress Park followed by fireworks concluded the festivities celebrating the opening of the Saratoga Spa, "America's first real spa."

*Sources:*

*The Saratogian July 26, 1935*

*Saratoga Spa Opening Celebration Program, July 26,27,28,1935.*

*Saratoga Spa Guide Book, July 26, 1935*