Train wreck begins BR hospitals

By LAURIE SMITH ANDERSON
 Advocate staff writer

Baton Rouge's first general hospital dates its origins to a train wreck that occurred here at the turn of the century.

Dr. T.P. Singletary, a practicing physician and surgeon for the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad, had the idea to open a hospital after treating two men injured in the wreck, according to early reports.

Singletary treated the men and other patients at a large frame building on Florida Street. In 1906, he opened a clinic and sanitarium on Government Street that evolved to become Baton Rouge General Hospital. A Charity Ward Association was formed soon after to provide services for the indigent sick.

Today, Baton Rouge has six full-service hospitals, including several that specialize in psychiatric, rehabilitative, oncology and women's health care. There are also several multiprofession practice clinics in the city.

Following is a list of hospitals, according to information from the Louisiana Hospital Association:

- Baton Rouge General Medical Center — Bluebonnet, 72 beds, with 30 additional beds to open later this year, off Bluebonnet Boulevard near Interstate 10. The hospital now offers emergency care, as well as inpatient and outpatient services. It is run by General Health Systems.
- Baton Rouge General Medical Center — Mid City, 393 beds, on Florida Boulevard at Acadian Thruway, is also operated by General Health Systems.
- Earl K. Long Medical Center, 257 beds, on Airline Highway near Greenwell Street, is a state public hospital.
- Lane Memorial Hospital, 107 beds, on Main Street in Zachary, is a community public hospital.
- Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, 701 beds, on Essen Lane near Interstate 10, is operated by the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady.
- Summit Hospital, 227 beds, off O'Neal Lane at Interstate 12, is a for-profit hospital owned by Tennessee-based Quorum Health Group Inc. and local doctors and investors.

Each of the hospitals offers a range of medical, surgical, emergency and diagnostic services, community outreach and educational programs that promote wellness.

Woman's Hospital, considered one of the nation's largest specialty hospitals, is located at Airline Highway and Goodwood Boulevard.

Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center, next to OLOL, is another large specialty medical center here and offers an array of services for cancer patients.

BHC Meadow Wood Hospital, off Perkins Road near Bluebonnet, serves as a psychiatric hospital. Concord Hospital serves psychiatric, rehabilitation and acute patients. Greenwell Springs Hospital, off Greenwell Springs Road, is the state's public psychiatric hospital that serves patients in this area.

Healthsouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Baton Rouge on United Plaza Boulevard serves patients needing physical rehabilitation.

Multiprofession practice clinics located here include Stancil Medical Clinic, Baton Rouge Clinic and Ochsner Clinic Baton Rouge.

The East Baton Rouge Parish Health Unit, on Florida, provides vaccinations and other health services.