History of the AANA Headquarters and the Office of the Executive Director—1931-1996

Key words: AANA Executive Director history, AANA Executive Office history, biographies.

Introduction

AANA founder Agatha C. Hodgins, CRNA, compared the destined growth of the Association to her own house in her address to the members at the National Association of Nurse Anesthetists (renamed the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists in 1939) Annual Meeting in 1933. She stated, "Let us keep our abiding faith, that each component group, now building their part of our organization, may so embody in their work the spiritual qualities of courage, simplicity, endurance and good judgment, that the integral who may, like this little house, give warmth, light and security to the present generation and be of continuing beauty and usefulness to generations coming after us." (p.12)

Ms. Hodgins' vision has proven correct when studying the growth of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) Executive Office from 1931-1996. The AANA has grown from a staff of one, located at the University Hospitals of Cleveland, Lakeside, to an Association employing approximately 80 people managed by an Executive Director and owning a four-story building and various subsidiaries, all for the purpose of meeting the needs of a diverse and information-driven membership.

AANA Executive Office, Cleveland, Ohio (1931-1937)

The first AANA Executive Office was located at the University Hospitals of Cleveland, Lakeside, in Cleveland, Ohio, from 1931-1934 (Figure 1). Leona Peck, CRNA, Department Secretary, was the only staff member who did everything necessary to run the AANA, which included bookkeeping, answering of correspondence, responsibility for publications, and other Association work. AANA Executive Secretaries included Matilda Miller Root, CRNA (1931-1932), Florence Boswell, CRNA (1933-1934), and Mary Lucile Goodman, CRNA (1934-1936). In 1935, office space was moved temporarily to 2073 Adelbert Road in Cleveland, Ohio.

Move to American Hospital Association Building, Chicago, Illinois (1937-1951)

On October 16, 1937, the AANA Executive Office was moved to Chicago, Illinois. Only the office of the Treasurer remained in Cleveland. By 1999, the Executive Office consisted of one desk in an office in the American Hospital Association (AHA) building. Anna Willenborg, CRNA, who was on the anesthesia staff at St. Joseph's Hospital in Chicago had served as Executive Secretary on a volunteer basis from 1937 to July 1, 1938. She later became a full-time salaried Executive Officer. Mary Elizabeth Appel, who was not a member, was em-
ployed in 1941 as a full-time Executive Secretary. She was replaced in 1943 by Anne M. Campbell, also a nonmember, who served until 1947. The Executive Office grew to one room; and by 1946, the Executive Office occupied a small suite within the AHA building.2(p9)

Move to 116 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago (1951-1957)

Once the AHA grew large enough that it needed all of the space in its building, the AANA moved its offices to 116 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago in 1951 (Figures 2 and 3). The suite at 116 was a “fashionable” address but not ideal for the needs of the AANA. The suite was short on space, but it was all the Association could afford at that time.3(p9)

Florence A. McQuillen, CRNA, first AANA Executive Director (1948-1970)

On May 1, 1948, Florence A. McQuillen, CRNA, became the first AANA Executive Director (Figure 4). Ms. McQuillen was a staff anesthetist and instructor of anesthesia under Dr. John S. Lundy at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. She also edited Anesthesia Abstracts, which represented the work of the Journal Club of the Section of Anesthesiology at Mayo Clinic from 1937-65.3(p9-13)

Ms. McQuillen was well read, worked long hours, and assumed most of the responsibilities for running the organization. Her ability to organize was instrumental in the growth of the AANA, which during her tenure increased from 3,200 to 14,539 members. She created an accreditation program (1950), Council (forerunner of the Assembly of States), and a voluntary continuing education program (1969). She presided over the initial liaison activities between the AANA and the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) with an ASA/AANA Liaison Committee being formed in 1964. Ms. McQuillen retired as Executive Director in 1970. She assumed the title of Director Emeritus and served as a Consultant to the AANA Board of Directors. In 1981, she was bestowed the Agatha Hodgins Award for outstanding accomplishment for dedication to excellence in the nurse anesthesia profession.3(p151-154)

Move to the Prudential Building in Chicago (1957-1971)

As the membership and the activities grew, members who attended meetings in Chicago urged that the Board of Directors consider finding a more suitable location for the headquarters. In 1957, the Executive Office was moved to the Prudential Building in Chicago. By this time, the work done by the Executive Office staff included:2(p9-10)

- Keeping the membership records.
- Collecting money from dues and other sources.
- Paying the Association’s bills.
- Arranging all meetings.
- Preparing and editing the AANA Journal and NewsBulletin.
- Correspondence with members.
- Conducting the educational and accreditation programs, including school visits.
- Preparing certification examination (then called the qualifying examination) materials and arranging for the conduct of the certification examination.
- Maintaining a lending library.
- Processing applications for junior membership and the certification examination.

By 1967, the number of persons employed at the Executive Office averaged one employee for each 1,000 members. In 1969, dues for active members were raised from $25 to $50. Junior and inactive member dues were raised from $5 to $10. Of the active member dues, $4 was sent to the member’s respective state association and $6 was allocated to publications and general office use. The $50 active member dues was divided in the following manner:2(p9)

- $15 to the state association.
- $5 to the education and accreditation programs.
- $5 to the Council (the current day Assembly of States) program.
- $4 to the publication program.
- The remaining $22 was used for other Association programs and obligations, rent, maintenance of the Executive Office, salaries of the Executive Office staff, retaining of legal counsel (Emanuel Hayt, JD), and expenses for the Board of Directors. Application and examination fees paid for the expenses incurred in the certification examination project.3(p10)

AANA Executive Director Bernice Baum, CRNA (1970-1976)

Bernice Baum, CRNA, served as AANA Executive Director from 1970 to 1976 (Figure 5). Ms. Baum originally joined the AANA staff on April 15, 1957 to serve as AANA Associate Director. Her tenure as AANA Executive Director saw the formation of the Councils on Accreditation, Certification, and Practice in 1975. She oversaw the Executive Office move to an expanded office suite in the Illinois Center Complex in 1971.

In 1973, the AANA became a charter member
of the National Federation for Specialty Nursing Organizations. The mid-1970s saw challenges to legitimacy of AANA's status as an accrediting agency for nurse anesthesia schools and programs—all of which were overcome. Also during that time frame, Ms. Baum, the AANA Washington Consultant, and the Board of Directors initiated support for third-party reimbursement legislation under Medicare for nurse anesthetists.

Move to Illinois Center Complex, 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago (1971-1978)

As additional office space was needed to support expanding member services and the Prudential Building lease was in negotiation, the AANA Board of Directors authorized Executive Director Bernice Baum and Executive Director Emeritus Florence McQuillen to seek a new headquarters. In 1971, the AANA Executive office moved from the Prudential Building to the Illinois Center Complex on East Wacker Drive in downtown Chicago. This building was close to the Wrigley and Prudential Buildings and provided the last rental space before the AANA purchased its own building.

Purchase of first AANA headquarters building at 216 Higgins Road, Park Ridge, Illinois (1978-1992)

In the 1977-78 fiscal year, the AANA Board of Directors and staff, facing a lease renewal that included a significant increase in rent and a need for more space, decided to explore the options of a new location and building ownership. A suitable building was found in Park Ridge, Illinois, and AANA President Ronald Caulk, CRNA (1978) entered into negotiations (Figure 6).

In 1978, with strong member support, the AANA purchased its first headquarters building located at 216 Higgins Road in Park Ridge, Illinois (Figure 7). The purchase of the building at 216 Higgins Road was ratified by more than two thirds of AANA members at the 1978 AANA Annual Meeting. The move took place in 1979, but the building was officially dedicated by the members on February 15, 1980. A little over a decade later, the AANA again outgrew its office space and sold the building to the Emergency Nurses Association in December 1992.

AANA Executive Director J. Martin Stone, MHA (1977-1979)

J. Martin Stone, MHA, non-AANA member, became the AANA's first male Executive Director on April 17, 1977. Mr. Stone oversaw the purchase of the AANA executive office building on 216 Higgins Road in Park Ridge, Illinois. In 1978, his administration marked the formation of the Council on Recertification. Nurse anesthesia is the only nursing specialty that certifies members initially upon entering practice and continues to recertify them every two years for as long as they practice in their profession.


Nancy Fevold, CRNA, MBA, served as Acting AANA Executive Director from 1976 to 1977 and Executive Director from 1979 to 1983 (Figure 8). Ms. Fevold was a member of the AANA Executive Office staff since September 1971, serving as Associate Director from 1971 to 1974, Assistant to the Executive Director from 1974 to 1976, and Deputy Executive Director from 1976 until 1979. The AANA Education and Research Foundation was formed under her administration.

Her administration also saw the beginning of an expanded public relations initiative; the first independent AANA Annual Meeting in 1976; the 50th anniversary celebration of AANA's founding; the launch of AANA's history project under the guidance of Janet McMahon, CRNA; and a variety of government affairs activities that included preliminary efforts for inclusion of and funding for nurse anesthetists in the Nurse Training Act.

AANA Executive Director John F. Garde, CRNA, MS, FAAN (1983-present)

John F. Garde, CRNA, MS, FAAN, the first male AANA President (1972-73), Council on Accreditation member, on-site accreditation visitor, consultant to the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthetists, and Education Director (1980-83), became AANA Executive Director on June 18, 1983 (Figure 9). During the six months before Mr. Garde officially took office, he assumed responsibilities in the areas of the AANA Annual Meeting, government/legislation, and the AANA Education and Research Foundation.

As AANA Executive Director, Mr. Garde was instrumental in the establishment of an expanded Information Systems Department which enabled the substantial upgrade of the Association's computer system, introduction of electronic mail for use by Board and staff, establishment of a computerized legislative contact network, telephone/fax automation of CE credits, and development of a Home Page for AANA on the World Wide Web. AANA subsidiaries Anesthesia Professional Liability Services (A+), Prospect Travel, Inc., and AANA Publishing, Inc. were formed. The publication of Watchful Care: A History of America's Nurse
Figures

1. University Hospitals of Cleveland, Lakeside, in Cleveland, Ohio, no date.

2. AANA offices at 116 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, January 1953.

3. Virginia Thatcher (left), Florence A. McQuillen, CRNA (center), and Elaine Langer, stenographer, (right) in AANA offices at 116 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, January 1953.


5. AANA Executive Director Bernice Baum, CRNA (left), no date. AANA Archives.


8. AANA Executive Director Nancy Fevold, CRNA, MBA, no date.

9. 1993 AANA President Peggy L. McFadden, CRNA, BS, and AANA Executive Director John F. Garde, CRNA, MS, FAAN, at the 222 South Prospect Avenue building dedication on April 24, 1993.


(The above photographs are courtesy of the AANA Archives.)
Anesthetists, by Marianne Bankert, took place. Mr. Garde's administration has also overseen the opening of the AANA Washington, DC Office and the purchase in 1992 of the new Executive Office building at 222 South Prospect Avenue, Park Ridge, Illinois.

His administration saw the movement of nurse anesthesia programs to the graduate level, an activity which will be fully implemented in 1998. In 1986, Medicare Direct Reimbursement Legislation was signed into law, making nurse anesthesia the first nursing specialty accorded direct reimbursement rights under Medicare. In 1994, Mr. Garde was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN). Also during Mr. Garde's tenure as Executive Director, the AANA has been a leader in the formation of the International Federation of Nurse Anesthetists (IFNA). IFNA now has its own executive director (Ronald F. Caulk, CRNA) and is housed in the AANA Building at 222 South Prospect.

Purchase of the AANA Building at 222 South Prospect, Park Ridge (1992-present)

On October 1, 1992, the AANA purchased a 43,000-square foot building located at 222 South Prospect Avenue in downtown Park Ridge due to a need for additional office space to handle burgeoning Association activity (Figure 10). This was accomplished in part by a successful fundraising effort by the AANA and the AANA's Education and Research Foundation. AANA Past-president (1992) Scott Gray, CRNA, stated, "The purchase of the new AANA headquarters building was aided through successful fundraising efforts by the AANA and AANA's Education and Research Foundation. Hundreds of AANA members around the country donated funds to meet the campaign goal of $500,000. Additional funds went to develop a new in-house Learning Center. The Learning Center will offer education courses for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) nationwide in areas such as regional anesthesia and faculty development."

The building was built in July 1967 at the cost of $496,263 and designed by the architects Ezra Gordon and Jack Levin Associates. Previous owners of the building from 1975 included an insurance company and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. The new building is close to O'Hare Airport in Chicago and has three times the square footage of the AANA's previous building at 216 Higgins Road.

The AANA Executive Office staff moved into the building the first week of December 1992. On Saturday, April 24, 1993, a ribbon-cutting dedication ceremony was held in honor of the AANA new headquarters. The emotions on that day were best described by AANA Executive Director John F. Garde who stated, "Our new home represents a monument to our profession. Nurse anesthesia had its origins some 100 years ago. Our Association has come a long way from the first meeting of the Lakeside Hospital alumnae group of nurse anesthetists, who met in Cleveland, Ohio in 1931 to found the organization. Our new headquarters at 222 South Prospect Avenue symbolizes our members' interests and commitment to their profession's future."

Conclusion

The AANA Executive Office is a growing and evolving entity. The Executive Office changes and grows with the evolving needs of AANA membership and the profession of nurse anesthesia. If alive, Ms. Hodgins, who was correct in her vision of the Executive Office, might be the only one who is not surprised by the vast growth of the Executive Office.

REFERENCES