

January 14, 2008

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Post-Polio Health

(Marriott Residence Inn Hotel)

International

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Attention: Joan L. Headley, Executive Director

Dear Miss/Mrs. Headley,

Pursuant to our recent telephone conversation relative to my post-polio syndrome history, I have gathered several pages of information which I shall attach.

In September, 2000, I went to Advantage Health Rehabilitation Clinic in South Portland, Maine. I was examined by Altaf Ahmed, M.D. and at that time I was diagnosed as having PPS.

Maine had been my childhood home, though I moved from there in 1951. My late husband, who died in 1988, had moved to the mid-Florida Keys upon retirement where the warm climate was much more agreeable to our ageing bodies.

I remained there until 2006 when I could no longer drive the 260 miles round-trip to the mainland to visit Cleveland Clinic Florida-Weston Campus in Broward County for my medical care.

I then sold our condominium and removed

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to Weston, Florida where I am only one mile from CCF. I am still able to drive enough to attend to errands. I was born September 9, 1931 on a farm in Carthage, Maine but lived in Wilton, Maine during my early years where my father worked at G. H. Bass Shoe Co. My mother died when I was three from spinal meningitis. I enclosed the article on the polio braces dad made.

When I was stricken with polio October 2, 1937 I received medical care through-out the term of my illness from our village doctor, Maynard B. Colley, M.D. (1905-1999) whose dedication and labors were frequently paid off in garden produce venison, wild ducks etc. and I believe many of his calls were simply written off.

By the time I contracted polio, my father had remarried, a wonderful young woman, in February of 1937. By April that year, my new mom was pregnant and my father was bed-ridden with Rheumatic Fever. This was followed by my contracting polio in October, 1937. My mom was relentless in exercising me until my recovery was as complete as it would ever be. It was probably above 90% as I was enabled to play field hockey, basketball, ski, ice-skate and enjoy many decades for which I have always been eternally grateful. I have done everything that I ever wanted to do before the onset of the PPS.

With my Cleveland Clinic Florida and its over 40 departments, I am able to keep stabilized and as comfortable as it is possible be and continue to deteriorate at the same time.

In the mid 1990's, for a period of three years, I was one of 900 asked to participate in a survey by the University of Michigan. It tracked degrees of debilitation. I don't know the results as I was never furnished with a copy. They just notified me when it was complete.

My arthritic fingers are at an end for today, so I shall complete this by saying: if you have any questions on the above information, please call. Since I live alone and have no family or friends here, I'm usually in my rooms reading, watching TV or playing piano. I am very glad that I was never a person who needed to be surrounded by people to be happy.

I hope this will all be of some interest or help. You have my permission to utilize this information in whatever manner you consider to be worthwhile.

If it isn't too much trouble, I would be interested to learn how it was used.

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) Francine Lake Bergman

Francine -

Taken ill Sat Oct. 2 1937 - vomiting during forenoon - high temperature
pains in back of neck and sore
ness in neck and back. Doctor Colley suspicious of Infantile Paralysis.
Had Doctor Colley Sat. morning and again Sat. noon. Brought Dr
Mitchell, the ^{asst} state doctor with him. He called it Infantile Paralysis.
Gave serum Sat. noon. Put Francine to bed. Strong reflex in left leg
Sun. still sick to her stomach back and neck very sore.

Mon. - feeling better - taking liquid nourishment. not so much sore in
in neck and back. no paralysis - made board to keep feet straight.

Tues - more like self. Taking nourishment good. Back and neck better
not very sore - left leg seemed weaker than right.

Wed. - Feeling good - Eating well - sleeping nights. Back and neck pain +
soreness gone - pain beginning in upper part of left leg. Kept legs
straight out - used frame to keep feet straight. no paralysis

Thurs. Temp. down. Complaining of lameness and soreness in left leg.
Keeping left leg also right leg straight in bed. State nurse called
Iris - vomiting today. left leg still sore - right shoulder lame
weakness prominent in left leg. strong reflex in stomach.

Sat - much better today. Taking nourishment again - us-
sand bags to keep left leg straight. temp normal - Dr. Colley
believes there won't be any paralysis. left leg pained quite a bit
in night.

Sunday pain has left leg - keeping Francine quite - keeping legs
straight as possible. feeling good today. eating well - temp normal.

Mon - Feeling good today. eating well - not very sore or lame
got splint made for leg. Francine likes splint. temp normal

Tues - About same as yesterday. Sleeping well - seems to
be gaining strength in leg. Doctor Colley finds right arm is
weaker than left - going to keep it in sling for awhile.

Wed - Miss Nichols Oxford County nurse called today. Thinks Francine
is getting along well. Very pleased with ~~the~~ splint.

1937-38

Francine Lake was recently taken to Lewiston to attend a clinic at the C. M. G. Hospital and the doctors were much pleased with her recovery from infantile paralysis, although she must be kept very still for some time yet. She is obliged to wear a brace on one leg, and the brace was so much better than any the doctors had seen that they made inquiries about it and were surprised to learn that her father, Irving Lake, had designed and made it. Upon hearing that, they asked him to make 13 sets for their use, which is certainly a compliment to him and his ability.

(Enlarged from the original size.)

Note: Lewiston was a 40 mile trip, each way, over bad roads in 1937.

Article published in
Wilton, Maine
(Weekly Newspaper)

Probably an
issue in late 1937
or early 1938.

Note

Irving Lake, my
father, worked at
G. H. Bass Shoe Co.
in Wilton, Maine
for 47 years. He
was able to use
discarded pieces
of soft leather and
sheep skin and
lath wood from
his cellar work-
shop to fashion
these braces & used
buckles to adjust straps
to hold them in place.

by:
Francine Lake
Bergman