

Clinic Founder Harvey E. Rinehart Leading Citizen of North Tillamook County

According to a December 13, 1928 profile in the *Wheeler Reporter*, “Dr. H. E. Rinehart, physician and surgeon ... might easily be considered one of the outstanding personalities of Tillamook County.”

Harvey E. Rinehart, MD and his wife Ella, arrived in Wheeler in 1913 at the behest of mill owner C. H. Wheeler, to work as the mill physician and establish a hospital/clinic. Dr. Rinehart was born in 1885 in Summerville, Oregon to Dr. Willard E. and Dr. Belle C. Rinehart. He started his education at Oregon State College where he was a star football player, and received his medical degree from the University of Oregon medical school in 1913. Upon their arrival in Wheeler, Dr. and Mrs. Rinehart learned that the mill would close for several months, undergoing a retrofit that would double production with the installation of a new larger saw. This made their first months in North Tillamook County a challenge, and as Ella Rinehart related to her grandson, Harry H. Rinehart MD, “We ate a lot of blackberries and clams that first year.”

Over the following decades, Dr. Harvey E. Rinehart’s medical practice grew to become far-reaching and effective as he developed treatments for arthritis that became nationally known. Patients came from across the country for the three week treatments that included IV’s, gold treatments, physical therapy and hot wax applications. “They would be lined up around the block,” according to many past staff members. “They would come in wheelchairs, on crutches, using canes, and three weeks later walk out unaided.”



Ella, Robert and Harvey Rinehart, early 1930s.

These were the days of home visits by the local doctor, and many residents remember Dr. Harvey delivering their siblings at home. In 1940, Dr. Rinehart purchased the Hotel Rector in downtown Wheeler (currently the Old Wheeler Hotel) and expanded the Clinic’s offices.

During the early years from 1914 through 1940, Rinehart operated a “modern” hospital located on “Mill Hill”. He saw patients at the Mill, an office in downtown Wheeler, and most often in their own homes.

In 1922, Rinehart purchased 200 acres near Manzanita, including Lake Neah-Kah-Nie, and raised brook trout for commercial purposes. He also offered the lake to the state fish department where more than one million Chinook salmon were propagated. Another novel and successful use of the lake included the raising of 33 varieties of water lilies. Dr. Harvey Rinehart is credited with the invention of a pump-style fishing reel known as the “Master Kaster” patented by Joseph C. Berry in 1936 with the patent assigned to Utility Electric and Machine Works Inc., Wheeler, Oregon. Dr. Rinehart’s name was included in the logo and it is likely that Berry and Rinehart collaborated on the invention.



Presidential candidate in 1948 Thomas Dewey with Dr. Harvey Rinehart and his Master Kaster fishing rod.

Another venture of Rinehart’s was the raising of fox with S. M. Batterson. In 1925, Rinehart and Batterson started a fox farm and received the highest prices for pelts – one pelt alone brought \$345 in Portland. According to Dr. Rinehart, “Everything is ideal here for the propagation of foxes,” he stated, “...with no hot summer days and moist nights the pelts develop into the finest produced any place in the United States.”

He was chairman of the Union High School board, city health official, member of the Volunteer Medical Corps, Tillamook County medical society, and president of the Oregon Medical Association; founder of the Wheeler Masonic lodge, of which he was master in 1919 and 1924, and of Al Kader temple of the Shrine, in Portland.

The *Wheeler Reporter* 1928 profile concluded that “Dr. Harvey Rinehart is a firm believer in the future of this area, a tireless worker and a citizen devoted to the upbuilding of northern Tillamook county. Dr. Rinehart is a valuable man in the community.” Dr. Harvey Rinehart passed away unexpectedly in 1950; his namesake Clinic continues today.



Staff at the Clinic in mid-1940’s (front) Ethel Perkins, Louise Seepka, Dr. Harvey Rinehart, Kate Waterhouse, Tiki Dick, Edna Wright, Ed Hatch; Back — Stuart Scott, Juanita Steiner, Edna Richter, Eleanor Bangs, Helen Hatch

So, began the commitment of the Rinehart family of physicians to North Tillamook County, providing compassionate community care for all.

Can You Identify Anyone in This Photo?



Taken in 1959, this photo shows Dr. Dorothy White (in the middle of the photo) surrounded by mothers and their children that Dr. White had delivered since the “new” hospital had opened in 1955. If you know anyone in this photo please contact Laura Swanson at 503-368-5182 ext. 176 or e-mail to lswanson@rinehartclinic.org.

Help Us Put 100 (or more) Candles on The Rinehart Clinic Birthday Cake



Honor someone special ...

For a donation of \$100.00, you can honor or memorialize someone with a personalized birthday candle on The Rinehart Clinic 100th birthday cake.

A special display built by Neah-Kah-Nie High School students will be set-up on the corner of Hwy. 101 and Hospital Road in Wheeler. To reserve your birthday candles, please contact Laura Swanson at 503-368-5182 ext. 176 or e-mail to lswanson@rinehartclinic.org.