

OSF HealthCare St. Joseph Medical Center took a step back into history Friday. OSF HealthCare leadership marked 50 years at the Bloomington hospital's East Washington Street location by opening a time capsule. The time capsule was sealed in the hospital's cornerstone in 1968 when the building was completed.

Sister Judith Ann Duval, Chairperson of the OSF HealthCare Boards of Directors, pulled the items from the soldered copper box in front of a room packed with OSF Mission Partners.

She explained the relevance of each piece, from photographs and employee guidebooks to newspaper clippings, and even a carpet sample from an administrative office.

Sister Judith Ann says that while health care has certainly changed over the decades, the central Mission of OSF HealthCare has not.

"The same wonderful God that called us to this Mission continues to call us today. And many things have changed, but our core spirit culture has not. To be there in the service of human life, to care for them with the greatest care and love in the spirit of Christ is the same. And it will take on even newer nuances in the future. But bet your boots, that core will still be there, and that's what makes it so special," she said.

Lynn Fulton, the President of OSF HealthCare St. Joseph Medical Center, agrees. As St. Joseph continues to evolve, Fulton says she believes the Sisters who championed this building 50 years ago would be proud of where it is today.

"They were obviously pioneers in their day as well. Looking to where they located this, their thoughts behind this building, really their foresight. And I think they would be really proud of where St. Joseph is today, and what we're doing and how we are serving our community," said Fulton.

While the current OSF St. Joseph Medical Center building boasts 50 years in the community, OSF HealthCare's rich history in Bloomington reaches back even farther.

A group of Sisters journeyed to Bloomington from Peoria by horse-drawn wagon in February 1880 to establish a hospital for the sick and the poor.

The Sisters purchased five acres of land with a two-story brick mansion on Jackson Street in west Bloomington. That mansion became St. Joseph's Hospital, which received its first patient on March 22, 1880.