



## THE MEDFORD TUBERCULOSIS SANITARIUM – Coram, NY

On the east side of Route 112 about a mile south of Middle Country Road in Coram are concrete ruins of what was once a local Sanitarium

The official name was the Medford Tuberculous Sanitarium for Working men and Women of Brookhaven Town. It was owned by Central Labor Union of Brooklyn and Queens and Brooklyn Bureau of Charities to benefit its members and was to be built to house 90 children.

The facility was on 60 acres of property formally known as part of the Overton Farm; most of the property would remain wooded. The parcel was purchased by from George Phillips in 1913. It was run by local physicians Dr. W.H. Ross and Dr. Frank Overton of Patchogue. The facility opened in 1913, housing 20 children suffering Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The building, smaller than first proposed in 1905 (see picture), consisted of two porch like sleeping wings, a formal dining room, kitchen, offices and accommodations for 25. Adults were also treated there when needed. The cost of construction was \$6,000 and cost the Suffolk taxpayers and extra 50 cents a year. In 1916 an additional pavilion was built.



A normal day at the hospital consisted of care of the children which ranged at times from 10 to 30 at a time, they were treated to a camp like experience during treatment which consisted of all the food they wanted, all the fresh air and night's sleep they needed. They spent most of their days outside except in inclement weather with little or no dose of medicine and two hours to lie down during the day. Several children during their stay would gain in excess of twenty pounds and be discharged "to take positions in the homes of neighboring people"

In 1926, the building was threatened by an enormous forest fire that ravaged the center of Suffolk County from Bohemia to Coram, destroying thousands of acres of woodland and several homes. Local firefighters and residents feverishly dug trenches and lit backfires to protect the building.

The facility remained open until the 1930s when a larger facility was needed and located at what is now the site of the Suffolk County Community College.

All that remains today is the concrete foundation of a facility that was well ahead of its time.

