

Come celebrate with us!

January 2010 marks the 110th anniversary of Children's Home Society of Virginia, and we are celebrating with an exhibit at the Library of Virginia.

Opening Jan. 4 and continuing through May 1, "*Children's Home Society of Virginia: Every Child Deserves a Home*" examines how foster care has evolved over the years and how CHS has remained steadfast in its mission of finding permanent, adoptive homes for all children.

You'll see photos of children and families, as well as letters, documents and other artifacts, that will give you a personal look at foster care and those it impacts.

The Library of Virginia is located at 800 E. Broad St. in downtown Richmond. For details, call us at (804) 353-0191 or visit www.chsva.org/news or www.lva.virginia.gov/



Our family history

CHS can trace its roots back to 1899, when a group of concerned citizens banded together to help abandoned and neglected children. These men and women were horrified by the fact that thousands of children in Virginia lacked proper food, clothing and safe shelter. Appalled at the care offered in orphanages, they set out to provide more secure futures for every child in need.

The first meeting of the newly organized society was held on Nov. 23, 1900 in the parlor of the Young Man's Christian Association in Richmond. William J. Maybee was named the agency's first executive director.

In those early days, children were cared for at the Belle Bryan Day Nursery. But the nursery soon became overcrowded. In 1905, CHS purchased a house at 2605 East Franklin St. as a receiving home and central office. Children lived there pending placement with a suitable family.

During the first year, the agency facilitated 29 adoptions. By 1912, the total number of adoptions had grown to 259. To accommodate the growth, a receiving home in Roanoke opened in 1920. Other branches followed across



the state, including Portsmouth, Fredericksburg, Arlington and Charlottesville.

But it wasn't always smooth sailing. CHS was in danger of closing in 1930 when the agency's deficit reached \$50,000. A statewide campaign, however, raised the necessary funds.

It was around this time that individual foster homes became more popular and CHS closed its receiving homes. The current headquarters at 4200 Fitzhugh Ave. in Richmond opened in 1968. Today, the agency not only finds permanent homes for children of all ages - more than 12,500 since its inception - but offers pregnancy counseling, temporary foster care, search and reunion services and a lifetime of support to families.

In 1998, CHS began its signature program, Partnership for Adoptions, which works to find permanent homes for older children in the foster care system.

While much has changed since CHS placed its first child for adoption, one thing remains the same -- children of all ages and backgrounds deserve permanent homes where they will be loved and nurtured.



Did you know?

- William Maybee, the first executive director at CHS, was paid \$1,800 a year when he took the job in 1900.
- The CHS annual budget grew from about \$2,000 to \$90,000 over the first 25 years. It stands at about \$1.3 million today.
- A receiving home in Roanoke opened in 1920. By 1925 it housed an average population of 30.
- CHS recorded 29 adoptions its first year.