Queen Square and Maida Vale join together to become the National Hospitals for Nervous Diseases (1948)

Sir Ernest Gowers first chairman of Board of Governors (1948); succeeded by Sir John Woods (1957)

H Ewart Mitchell first Hospital Secretary (Administrator) (1948)

Lysholm Radiological Department opens at Queen Square with Dr Hugh Davies in charge (1948)

Matron Margery Ling and some of her nursing staff make tours of duty at the Medical Research Council (MRC) Nutritional Field Station at Fajara in the Gambia (1948)

Shortage of nurses a major problem (1948); agency nurses begin to be employed to make up for the shortage (1950)

Miss Westacott retires after 15 years as Matron at Maida Vale and is succeeded by Miss Baines (1950)

A nursing service from Queen Square to Claremont Street Hospital for Nervous Diseases in Belfast begins (1950)

Neuropsychiatric unit reopens on 7th floor of Queen Mary Wing (1950)

The Medical School becomes a Federated Institute of the British Postgraduate Medical School with Sir Ernest Gowers as Chairman of the Committee of Management and Dr Macdonald Critchley as Dean (1950); Maida Vale Medical School incorporated (1951)

Gowers Library opens, a gift from the sisters of Sir William Gowers (1951)

A name change for the Hospitals is turned down, the medical staff's view being that the public should be educated to understand the term "nervous diseases" (1952)

The Department of Clinical Photography opens (1952); now called Audio Visual Services

Batten Unit opens to treat acute polio cases in isolation; named after Dr F E Batten (1953)

In 1948 the birth of the National Health Service brought about revolutionary changes in health care throughout Britain. This legislation also created a network of national hospitals, focal points for research, teaching and treatment of patients with certain diseases or conditions.

On November 15, 1988, the National Hospitals for Nervous Diseases celebrated 40 years of existence with a seminar about the Hospitals and a reception attended by HRH The Princess of Wales. The following photographs and chronology of events highlight a small portion of the people and developments which have contributed to the Hospitals' worldwide reputation as "the mecca of neurology."

Editor's Note:
The photographs in this story were obtained from the Gowers Library. The primary source of information was "The National Hospitals for Nervous Diseases 1948-1982" by Geoffrey Robinson, with additional information from Dr Peter Gautier-Smith.
Dr Robert Beaver, with help from Mr Morton, invents Beaver respirator for use in Batten Unit (1953)

Dr M Kremer becomes Dean of Institute of Neurology (1954)

Professor John Marshall appointed Reader in Clinical Neurology at Institute (1956)

HRH The Duchess of Gloucester opens the operating theatre at Maida Vale (1956)

Rehabilitation services are reorganised with Miss Hern (physiotherapy) and Mr Sharp (occupational therapy) in charge (1956)

Wards named to honour consultants: At Maida Vale – Aubrey Robinson, A Dettmar, E G Fearnside, and Julius Althaus, Chairman of the Hospital; At Queen Square – Victor Horsley, David Ferrier, Hughlings Jackson (1956)

Professor W Blackwood appointed first Chair in Neuropathology and Professor J N Cumings first Chair in Chemical Pathology (1958)

Miss Cherry Morris retires; succeeded as head of social work by Sheridan Russell (1958)

Geoffrey A Robinson appointed Hospitals Administrator (1959)

Friends of Maida Vale Hospital formed by Lady Brain (1959)

Centenary of the founding of the Hospitals is celebrated in June with a week-long programme of lectures, demonstrations and social events (1960)

Siemens Electron Microscope for Maida Vale provided by Walter J Palmer Trust (1960)

Mr Wylie McKissick obtains Leksell stereotaxic apparatus for surgical treatment of Parkinson’s Disease (1960)

Ladies Samaritan Society celebrates 100 years of service at Queen Square (1961)
Dr E A Carmichael retired as Director of (MRC) Neurological Research Unit (1961)

Rev S B Brown appointed first full-time Chaplin at Queen Square (1961)

Dr J W D Bull becomes Dean of Institute of Neurology (1962) and head of Lysholm Radiology Department (1967)

Professor R W Gilliatt appointed to first Chair in Clinical Neurology (1962)

Dr A P H Randle appointed first Consultant in Physical Medicine and reorganises rehabilitation services department (1962)

Electron Microscope Unit opens at Maida Vale (1962)

Research into the use of Alpha Methyl Dopamine (L Dopamine) indicates that it might have a place in the control of Parkinsonian tremor (1962)

Shorvon Memorial Lecture established, funded by gifts in memory of Dr L B Shorvon (1962)

New medical committee for the Hospitals has first meeting on December 10th with Dr J St C Elkington in the Chair, Dr Redvers Ironside as Deputy Chairman and Dr C J Earl as Secretary (1962)

Keith Miller Jones becomes Chairman of the Hospitals Board of Governors (1963)

MRC funds Research Group of Applied Neuropsychology under the direction of Prof J B Cavanagh, first doctor attached to Institute in pure basic scientific research; Group provides opportunities for young neurologists to be involved in programmes of non-clinical investigation (1964)

Dr Paul Sandifer, pioneer of paediatric neurology, dies suddenly (1964)

Wellcome Trust makes gift of £8,345 to provide laboratory for protein and neurological studies at Maida Vale (1965)

Maida Vale Hospital celebrates its Centenary with a three-day programme of events in July (1966)
Possession of St John's House formally transferred to National Hospitals (1967)

HRH Princess Alice of Athlone opens new Rehabilitation Unit at Finchley (1967)

Dr R E Kelly becomes Dean of Institute of Neurology (1968); succeeded by Dr Peter Gautier-Smith (1975)

Dr S Nevin retires; EEG departments combined under Dr W A Cobb (1970)

Brain Research Trust established to support the work of the Institute with Lord Aldington first Chairman (1971)

Institute receives grant of £48,000 from Wolfson Foundation to upgrade lecture theatre at Queen Square; reopens in October as Wolfson Lecture Theatre (1971)

Frank Wendon retires after 40 years as Head Porter (1971)

The National Hospitals – Chalfont Centre for Epilepsy becomes a reality (1971)

Department of Neurosurgical Studies established at Maida Vale with Prof Valentine Logue in charge (1972); succeeded by Prof Lindsay Symon (1977)

National Hospitals College of Speech Sciences opens; Dr Jean Cooper heads programme (1972)

Miss A Hamilton, Superintendent Radiographer since 1945, retires (1972)

London and Provincial Nursing Service founded as non-profit making concern to provide nurses to NHS hospitals (1973)

One of the first CT (computerised tomography) scanners installed at Queen Square (1973)

Departments of Neurochemistry and Neurophysiology (1973/74) and Neurosurgery (1976) endowed at Institute by Brain Research Trust

Sir Leslie Williams named Chairman of Board of Governors (1974)
Hospital publishes "National Dishes," compiled and edited by Miss Lesley J Chambers; proceeds buy equipment for disabled patients (1981)

National Hospital becomes a Special Health Authority in line with NHS framework (1981)

John Young CBE named Chairman of Board of Governors (1982); succeeded by Tom Oakman (1984)

Prof John Marshall becomes Dean of Institute of Neurology (1982); succeeded by Dr David Landon (1987)

National Hospital Development Foundation established to support proposed redevelopment; John Young CBE is Chairman (1984)

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) unit opened by HRH The Prince of Wales (1984)

HRH The Princess of Wales becomes Patron of the National Hospitals (1986)

Prof David Marsden appointed to Chair of Clinical Neurology (1987)

HRH The Princess of Wales visits Maida Vale and Finchley (1987)

Development Foundation officially launches fund-raising appeal at Guildhall Reception (1987)

New Siemens CT Scanner installed at Queen Square (1987)

Chandler House opens – new home of College of Speech Sciences and Nursing Studies Unit (1987)

Lysholm Radiology Department reopens after £4 million facelift (1988)

Royal Opera Gala benefits Foundation; Macarthy PLC sponsors "The Magic Flute" (1988)

Anthony Wheatley named General Manager of National Hospitals (1988)

National Hospitals for Nervous Diseases marks 40 years of research, teaching and the treatment of patients (1988)

Laboratories on first floor of Queen Mary Wing named the Carmichael Laboratories in honour of Dr E A Carmichael (1977)

Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, opens Queen Square House on July 19th (1978)

Peter Zimmerman becomes Hospitals General Manager (Administrator) (1980); succeeded temporarily by Prof John Marshall (1987)

Department of Hearing and Balance (neuro-otology) moves to new quarters in Queen Mary Wing (1981)

Miss Barbara Johnston becomes Matron (Director of Nursing) for the National Hospitals following Miss Ling's retirement (1981)