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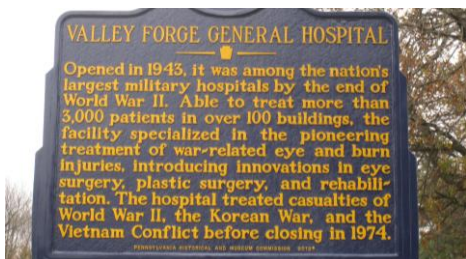
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## World War II



<http://www.hspa-pa.org/Valley%20Forge%20General%20Hospital%20Marker.html>

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## The Development of the Long Cane



Dr Richard Hoover: the founder  
of modern long cane techniques

"I think the first thing they need to know is how to get around. We've been working on it, but not enough. People say blind people in this country do a good job of getting around. I don't think they do a good job. I think they do a hell of a poor job."

<http://www.sauerburger.org/dona/omhistory.htm>

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## “Orientation” and “Mobility”



<http://www.sauerburger.org/dona/omhistory.htm>

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## Definitions of Orientation & Mobility

- “The ability to move **independently, safely,** and **purposefully** through the environment”
- Welsh, R. L., & Blasch, B. (1980). Introduction. In R. L. Welsh & B. Blasch (Eds.), *Foundations of orientation and mobility* (pp. 1-8). New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

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## Definitions of Orientation & Mobility

- “Orientation refers to the ability to establish and maintain an **awareness of one’s position in space**, while mobility refers to the act of **moving through space in a safe and efficient manner.**”
- LaGrow, S. (2010). Improving perception for orientation and mobility. In W. R. Weiner, R. L. Welsch, & B. Blasch (Eds.), *Foundations of orientation and mobility* (3rd ed., Vol. II: Instructional strategies and practical applications, pp. 3–26). New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

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## Definitions of Orientation & Mobility

- “Independent travel is...the ability to move about independently, safely, confidently, with **ease** and **spontaneity**, using **choice** of mode or travel device.”
- Huebner, K. M., & Sidwell, L. (2004). Independent Travel. In D. W. Dew & G. M. Alan (Eds.), *29th Institute on Rehabilitation Issues: Contemporary issues in orientation and mobility* (pp. 33–52). The George Washington University Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program.

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## Orientation

- **Orientation:**
  - Knowing one’s position in relation to other objects, people, and places in one’s surroundings.
  - Keeping track of how those positions and relationships change as one moves through the environment.
    - Where am I?
    - Where am I going?
    - How am I going to get there?



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## Mobility

- The physical act of moving safely and efficiently from one place to another.



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## Orientation Skills

- Ability to identify and use **sensory** and **environmental** landmarks, cues, and orientation points.



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## Orientation skills

- **Cognitive processes:**
  - Concept development:
    - Understanding the body and its position in space
    - Directionality
    - Distance
    - Spatial concepts
    - Physical environment
  - Problem solving skills
  - Decision making

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## Mobility Skills



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## O&M for Children

- Offered to school-age children during the 1950s in the US
- Proviso that children be “mobility ready”
- Long cane not introduced until children mastered “pre-requisite skills”
- Initial age recommendations for long cane introduction: 12-14 years of age

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## O&M for Children



1980s - 'precane' devices developed.

O&M with children aged 4-5 years but rarely younger.

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## Kiddy-canes



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## Developmental O&M



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## Development of the O&M Profession

- O&M intervention in rehabilitation hospitals spread across the US in the 1950s.
- O&M considered a “trade” rather than a profession
  - Short training courses for instructors
  - Male dominated

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## Development of the Profession



• <http://www.aph.org/hall/bios/suterko.html>

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## US O&M Personnel Courses

- Established in Boston 1960
- Professional certification developed in 1961
- Current US certification requirements:
  - COMS (Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist)
  - ACVREP
  - <http://www.acvrep.org/>

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## The O&M profession in Australia



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold\\_Cook](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Cook)

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## National Guide Dog Training Centre



<https://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au/about-us/history/>

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## Australian training courses

- First O&M instructors trained in 1971
- Kew site the only training option in Australia until the late 1980s.
- Courses offered since the 1990s:
  - La Trobe University
  - Renwick College (University of Newcastle)
  - Griffith University Queensland
  - Vision Australia (VET sector)

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## Professional Body

- 1971 – 1995: Orientation & Mobility Instructors Association of Australasia (OMIAA)
- 1998: OMSAV
- 2008: OMAA
- <http://www.omaaustralasia.com>

**Orientation + Mobility**  
Association of Australasia



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## How has the O&M Profession changed?

- Low vision
- Children
- Additional disabilities
- Technology
- Access issues
- O&M Specialists rather than “Instructors”
- NDIS – opportunities for private practice

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## Further Reading

- Bledsoe, C. W. (2010). The originators of orientation and mobility training. In W. R. Weiner, R. L. Welsh, & B. Blasch (Eds.), *Foundations of orientation and mobility* (3rd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 434–487). New York: American Foundation for the Blind.
- Branson, V. M., & Rutt, W. B. C. (1982). *Lead with a watchful eye. The silver jubilee of Guide Dogs in Australia*. Melbourne, Australia: The Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Associations of Australia.
- Deverell, L., & Scott, B. (2014). Orientation and mobility in Australia and New Zealand: situational analysis and census. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 108(1), 77-82.
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- Hoover, R. (1950). The cane as a travel aid. In P. Zahl (Ed.), *Blindness: Modern approaches to the unseen environment*. New York and London: Hafner Publishing Company.
- Kelley, P. (1999). *Historical development of orientation and mobility as a profession: An overview of the development of education, special education and the education of individuals with visual impairments*. Retrieved from <http://www.orientationandmobility.org/profession.html>
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