Heartbeats: Cardiovascular Milestones

St. Mary Medical Center

1991 — Cardiac services were established at St. Mary with the opening of the first cardiac catheterization lab in Bucks County.

1997 — First open-heart surgery in Bucks County is performed at St. Mary Medical Center.

1998 — St. Mary opens first electrophysiology lab in Bucks County to diagnose and treat irregular heartbeats.

2000 — The first off-pump coronary artery bypass graph surgery in Bucks County is performed at St. Mary.

2001 — The first abdominal aortic stent graft in Bucks County takes place at St. Mary Medical Center.

2002 — St. Mary physicians perform the first cardiac brachytherapy in Bucks County.

2002 — The first FDA-approved biventricular ICD implant in the region to treat congestive heart failure and ventricular tachycardia performed at St. Mary Medical Center.

2002 — St. Mary Medical Center's electrophysiology labs become the first in Bucks County to utilize a state-of-the-art 3-dimensional computerized mapping system in the treatment of cardiac arrhythmias.

2002 — Nearly 400 open-heart surgeries are performed each year at St. Mary.

2002 — Nearly 4,000 procedures are performed annually in the Cardiac Catheterization Labs at St. Mary.

2002 — The St. Mary Medical Center staff has grown to include nearly 50 cardiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons from some of the nation's top medical schools.

2002 — Approximately 1,200 procedures are performed in the St. Mary Electrophysiology Labs each year.

2003 — The first commercially available drug eluting stents go into use at St. Mary.

2003 — St. Mary's cardiac rehabilition program is awarded national certification by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

2004 — Interventional cardiologists at St. Mary perform the first cryoplasty using a special angioplasty balloon that fills with a cold gas to open blocked arteries in the legs.

2004 — St. Mary begins offering continuing medical education cardiology programs for primary care physicians.

2005 — St. Mary Medical Center becomes the first in Bucks County to implant a cardiac resynchronization therapy defibrillator system with automatic fluid status monitoring.

2005 — St. Mary performs first minimally invasive carotid stent procedure to prevent risk of stroke in patients with carotid artery disease.

2005 — St. Mary begins participating in groundbreaking international clinical study to determine the best treatment for patients with complex coronary disease.

2005 — The 25,000th cardiac catheterization is performed at St. Mary.

2005 — St. Mary begins using three-dimensional echocardiography technology to view highly detailed, real-time images of the human heart.

2005 — Two new electrophysiology laboratories are built at St. Mary and biplane imaging technology used to diagnose and treat atrial fibrillation is introduced.

2005 — St. Mary adds 64-slice CT technology to its imaging capabilities, increasing the Medical Center's ability to more accurately diagnose and treat life-threatening illnesses, including cardiovascular disease, stroke, and chest pain.

2005 — The St. Mary electrophysiology laboratory implants a new internal cardiac defibrillator that warns patients with symptoms of congestive heart failure.

2006 — St. Mary opens a new Cardiovascular Care Unit.

2006 — Electrophysiology specialists perform the first atrial fibrillation ablation, an advanced treatment for irregular heartbeat.

2006 — St. Mary introduces online appointment requests for cardiac diagnostics.

2007 — St. Mary cardiac catheterization lab performs its 30,000th procedure.

2007 — Advanced cardiovascular calcium scoring is offered to aid in the early detection of heart disease.

2007 — HEARTaware, an online cardiovascular risk assessment and modification program, is launched at St. Mary.

2008 — The Heart Center at St. Mary begins offering minimally invasive valve repair and replacement, atrial septal defect closures, and radio frequency ablation as treatment for atrial fibrillation.

2008 — The echocardiography laboratory at St. Mary earns national accreditation for adult transthoracic echocardiography, a non-invasive procedure that uses sound waves to help doctors examine a heart's structure and functioning during the diagnosis of heart disease.

2008 — St. Mary opens the Heart and Vascular Laboratory featuring four new, state-of-the-art catheterization suites and 14 prep and recovery rooms.

2009 — Cardiac Rehabilitation records more than 9,200 patient visits, the highest number of visits to the department in one year.

2009 — Approximately 1,500 procedures are performed in the St. Mary Electrophysiology Labs each year.

2009 — The St. Mary Medical Center staff has grown to include more than 75 cardiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons from some of the nation's top medical schools.

2009 — St. Mary performs more than 40,000 cardiac catheterizations and more than 4,000 open-heart surgeries to date.

2009 — St. Mary is rated in top 10% of all U.S. open-heart programs for cardiac surgery and top 5% nationally for patient satisfaction.

2010 — Cardiac Testing Department opens homelike inpatient reception area, furnished with comfortable seating, soft lighting, and flat-screen television.

2010 — Our program exceeds state and national quality benchmarks in 6 out of 6 key measures for heart attack care and 4 out of 4 key measures for congestive heart failure.

2010 — St Mary is first hospital in Bucks County to perform ultrafiltration therapy for heart failure patients.

2010 — Hypothermia therapy for cardiac arrest is implemented.

2010 — St. Mary installs advanced nuclear cardiac imaging camera for stress testing to increase patient comfort, improve image quality, and provide greater access to images.