

Hortense Hirsch, 103, a Volunteer In Health and Civic Organizations

By GLENN FOWLER

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Hortense Hirsch, a volunteer for social-welfare, educational and civic organizations and a trustee of Mount Sinai Medical Center for more than half a century, died on Tuesday at her suite in the Pierre Hotel in Manhattan. She was 103 years old.

During a career as a volunteer that began in the early years of the century, she was active in many organizations, including the Welfare and Health Council, now the Community Council of Greater New York; the National Urban League and the American Red Cross.

On her 80th birthday in 1967, Mount Sinai was joined by the United Hospital Fund, the United Jewish Appeal, the New York Association for New Americans, the Play Schools Association, the New York City Y.W.C.A., the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies and the Smith College Club of New York — all of which Mrs. Hirsch served for long periods as an officer, director, trustee or founder — in paying special tribute to her.

She contributed money as well as her time, benefiting institutions like Smith College, from which she graduated in 1907 at the age of 19; Northwestern University Law School, from which her father, Levy Mayer, graduated, and Princeton, where she endowed scholarships in memory of her husband, Walter A. Hirsch, a lawyer, who died in 1938, and their son, Lawrence, who died in 1960.

Mrs. Hirsch also worked on behalf of

many political candidates and frequently wrote to legislators on issues about which she or her organizations were concerned.

Seven years ago, when she was 96 years old and still active as a Mount Sinai trustee, a post she assumed in 1932, Mrs. Hirsch was asked why she had worked so long as a volunteer.

"I never know how I'm going to feel tomorrow," she said. "But I do what I can when I can. This work is still very important to me."

She was born in Chicago and came to New York to stay in 1909, when she married Mr. Hirsch. She spoke French, Italian and German, and the couple traveled extensively around the world.

At Smith, she was a member of the executive committee for many years. In 1968, she was awarded the Smith College Medal, given to those who "exemplify in their lives and service to their community or to the college the true purpose of liberal arts education."

In 1940, two years after her husband's death and in the year in which both her daughter and her son left home to marry, Mrs. Hirsch took a suite at the Pierre for six months, to give herself time to decide where to live permanently. She never moved, bought her suite when the Pierre went cooperative and at her death was the Pierre's longest-term resident.

She is survived by her daughter, Carol Kridel of Manhattan; five grandchildren, and two great-grandsons.

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