



Historical Happenings

Newsletter of the Physician Assistant History Society

Message from the President

Alfred M. Sadler, Jr., MD

It has been an exciting and productive summer for the History Society. On a personal note, while on vacation in England in June, I had the opportunity to visit the University of London, St. George's Physician Associate Program and meet with the dynamic Course Director, Karen Roberts, PA-C, M.S. She is a graduate of the University of Colorado's Child Health Associate Program, and moved to London with her British husband several years ago to help lead this successful program, now completing its fourth year. I enjoyed meeting with three of the graduates and their preceptors who are working at the Hospital in Oncology, the ICU and ENT/Maxillofacial Surgery. Reviewing our U.S. history with present day British students, brought me back decades to our own beginnings. Karen and I later met with one of the lead physicians at the Royal College of Physicians, who is spearheading successful efforts to expand the number of Programs throughout England. It was fascinating to meet these international students who have the same dreams as the U.S. pioneering PA students did nearly 50 years ago!

This month, the History Society, in collaboration with William Kohlhepp, DHSc, PA-C, submitted a proposal to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) to the US Postmaster General, for the issuance of a **Commemorative US Postage Stamp to honor the PA Profession**. The stamp would be issued on October 6, 2017 - the 50th anniversary of the graduation of the first PAs from Duke University's pioneering PA Program. The CSAC requires that all applications be submitted at least three years in advance of the date proposed for issuance of the stamp. *(continued on page 3)*

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NCCPA: Forty Years and Counting

Thomas E. Piemme, MD, Immediate Past President

In August, the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants quietly passed the fortieth anniversary of its founding on August 8, 1974.

In an unprecedented gathering, 14 major national organizations had come together in Chicago for a two day meeting, on August 7, to form a widely representative body that would provide a framework that state legislatures and licensing agencies might use to recognize the qualifications of the physician assistant to practice medicine under supervision.

Hosted by the American Medical Association, the meeting included participants from the major medical specialties, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Federation of State Medical Boards, the National Board of Medical Examiners,

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the American Nurses Association, the Federal government, the Association of Physician Assistant Programs, and the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

Central to the proposal, presented by the AMA, was recognition of the extraordinary success of the certification examination, developed and administered by the NBME eight months earlier. A "Commission," once formed would assume responsibility for eligibility to take the examination, the establishment of a passing standard, and a mechanism for maintenance and renewal of certification. No such multi-organizational oversight existed for any other medical profession.

I was personally in a unique position. I had been a member of the Goals and Priorities Committee of the NBME, an ad-hoc committee of the Board that recommended, in 1971, that the NBME undertake, for the first time in its history, an examination for health professionals, other than physicians. I now sat as the representative of APAP, as we discussed the structure and function of this new entity. There was relatively little disagreement. Thirteen of the organizations were to be represented by one "Commissioner" each. The AAPA was to have five. Three more were to be chosen as "public" members from the broader educational community – for a total of 21 members. The new National Commission would engage the NBME to continue to develop and administer the examination under contract. The representatives present scrutinized a draft of bylaws, and adjourned for the evening.

The following day, August 8, proved to be historic in more than one way. We had awakened to learn that the President of the United States, Richard Nixon, would address the nation that evening, presumably to announce his intention to resign his office. A number of those present had secured earlier plane reservations in order to return home earlier. Business was conducted rather expeditiously. The Bylaws, considered the day before, were unanimously approved, and officers elected. I was chosen to be the President; Frank Riddick, representing the AMA was elected Vice

President; Rhodes Haverty of the American Academy of Pediatrics was selected as the Secretary; and Carl Fasser of the AAPA was named Treasurer. The Executive Committee of the officers was empowered to search for an administrative officer, and to pursue foundation funding for the organization.

By October, David L. Glazer had been chosen to be the Executive Director. The Executive Committee had agreed that the organization could be established in Atlanta. Office space was secured by early December, staff was being recruited, and the NCCPA was ready to function in the New Year, 1975.

Trivia Contest to be Held at PAHX Booth During PAEA Conference

Do you know...

- Who was the founder of the PA profession?
- Which University graduated the first class of PA students?
- What positions did the first PAs hold before becoming physician assistants?
- Who was the first female PA?
- What is the name of the organization that certifies PAs?

It's time to brush up on your physician assistant history trivia so you can answer



those questions, and others, before attending the PAEA Conference next month in Philadelphia. The first 100 people who correctly answer a PA history trivia question when visiting the PAHX Booth will receive an awesome **PAHX Water Bottle**. Check out the Society's website (www.pahx.org); read *The Physician Assistant: An Illustrated History* book; study with your fellow PA students! Learn your PA history so you don't leave the conference empty-handed.

Visit your PAHX friends at Booth #108, located inside the PAEA Conference Exhibit Hall, on Thursday, Oct. 16 from 3:30pm-7:30pm and Friday, Oct. 17 from 8am – 11am.

Message from the President

Alfred M. Sadler, Jr., MD

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Approximately 40,000 applications are received annually and typically only 25 are chosen. In the past, Commemorative stamps have been issued for medicine, dentistry, nursing, and pharmacy. Although a “long shot”, given the number of proposals, we hope that our noble profession will be recognized and believe that we made our case, which has the backing of the four established PA organizations. Bill Kohlhepp and a planning committee had been working on this idea for several years. By combining our resources, we were able to craft a proposal that should be competitive. Thank you to Bill and his committee and also to Reggie Carter, Ruth Ballweg, Tom Piemme and Lori Konopka-Sauer, of the Society, for their contributions. A YES vote by the US Postmaster General would be very special indeed. We expect to learn the outcome sometime next year.

Work on the **Educational Toolkit** outlined in the last issue of *Historical Happenings*, has consumed considerable time and energy. The result is the near completion of five themed modules which will be showcased at a Focus Group of 24 Programs, who accepted our invitation to join us on the opening day

of the PAEA Conference in Philadelphia, on October 15. Feedback obtained through this process will help us to “fine tune” the Toolkit, which we plan to roll out to Associate members of the Society in January 2015.

We have begun collaborating with our sister organizations and individuals to celebrate the profession’s fiftieth year anniversary. Other anniversaries continue to be recognized as well (see Tom Piemme’s piece on the founding of the NCCPA forty years ago). The next issue of *Historical Happenings* will feature other initiatives that we are planning. We welcome ideas from all of you.

We were saddened by the passing of Dr. Robert Jewett, the third President of PAEA, and one of the early physician champions of the PA profession.

Regards to all,

Alfred M. Sadler, Jr., MD
President, PAHx Board of Trustees

History Society Images Used in Building Design

Earlier this year, the History Society was contacted by a designer from the architectural firm of Durkee, Brown, Viveiros & Werenfels (DBVW). The designer was interested in a variety of historical images from the PA profession that would be featured on the walls of a building they were renovating at Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island. PAHx was excited to be able provide the designers with the photographs they needed to complement the aesthetics of the building that would be home to the provisional PA Program at JWU.



photo credit: Heidi Gumula – DBVW Architects

The timeline photographs serve as an excellent reminder to the JWU Students of the pioneering PAs who made the profession what it is today. The Society was delighted to be called upon to assist the DBVW designers with this project, which showcases part of the PA profession’s history in this beautiful contemporary structure.

Robert E. Jewett, MD 1934-2014

Bob Jewett, the third President of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), passed away at the age of 80, after a period of declining health, in Gainesville, FL, on June 30, 2014.



Bob received both his undergraduate and medical education at the University of Michigan. Trained in clinical pharmacology at the University of Kansas, he joined the faculty of Emory University where he rose to become Executive Associate Dean of the School of Medicine. He was instrumental in founding the PA Program at Emory, and was elected to the Board of PAEA in 1973. He served as President in 1974-75, during the year when the new National Office opened for business, and the NCCPA was founded.

From Emory University, Bob moved to the newly established medical school at Wright State University where he was Associate Dean, and then became the Founding Dean at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN. He ended his career with the National Board of Medical Examiners, in Philadelphia, PA, where he served as a Vice President, overseeing examination development.

Bob will be missed by the many people whose lives he touched.



Visit our Web site to see what's "new" in PA History!

www.pahx.org



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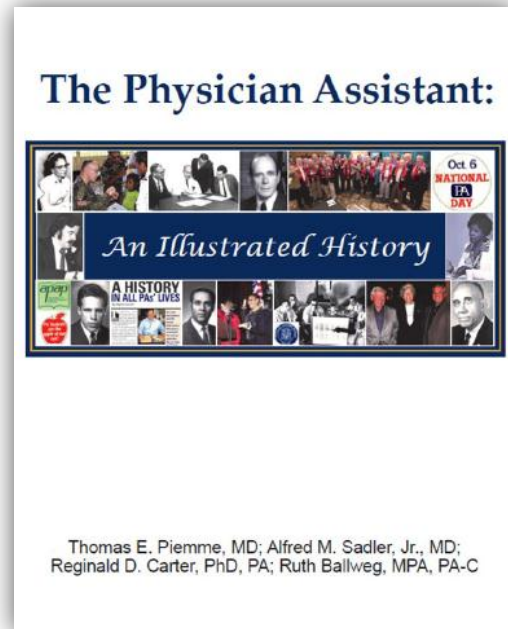
The Physician Assistant: *An Illustrated History*

A concise history of the people, places, and events that have propelled the concept of the PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT from its inception at Duke University in 1965 to its position as a major force in American medicine today.

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Thomas E. Piemme, MD; Alfred M. Sadler, Jr., MD; Reginald D. Carter, PhD, PA; Ruth Ballweg, MPA, PA-C

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