



Historical Happenings

Newsletter of the Physician Assistant History Society



Message from the President

Deborah Gerbert, MS, PA-C

Happy New Year to everyone. Many changes are sweeping across the country as the US Presidency changed hands on January 20th. I am hopeful for a coordinated, well-funded approach to the COVID pandemic that is affecting each of us. I feel very fortunate to be working in a health care system that offered the vaccine to all employees and their close family members who are over 65 years of age.

This edition of *Historical Happenings* will highlight much of the recent work of the History Society and its new Board of Trustee members. We are optimistic about our robust plans for 2021 despite our staff working rotating office schedules and our board and professional meetings being virtual.

I was excited to read last month in the US News and World Report's 2021 Best Jobs article that the PA profession was right on top. We have been in the top 3 since 2017 but can now claim number one. It prompted me to reflect on what the profession has done correctly to reach this top spot. After all, we have been in the medical workforce for a relatively short amount of time. It took visionary leaders to establish the educational, legislative, regulatory policies and processes to get us where we are. A unified approach to the profession's creation and forward progress was essential for its success.

I believe a major strength of our profession is its four national PA organizations. Lastly, and most importantly, I feel the main reason our profession was chosen number one is that PAs simply do a great job of caring for patients, their families and collaborating

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Black History Month: Celebrating African American PA Contributions

Black History Month was started in 1970 by African American educators and students at Kent State University. As the recognition caught on, it was soon celebrated across the United States. In 1976, US President Gerald Ford officially designated February as the month to celebrate and recognize the achievements of African Americans.

(Black History Month, continued on page 2)

(Black History Month, continued from page 1)



(Photo Caption) 1989, PAs Robert Howell, Joyce Nichols and Percy Golson with unidentified man in Washington, DC.

The PA History Society has created a webpage to help celebrate Black History Month by paying homage to the African American PAs who have contributed to the PA profession and to delivering high quality healthcare to their patients and communities.

You can listen to audio recordings, watch videos, check out vintage photos and read the inspiring biographies featured on the PAHx Black History Month website page [here](#).



(Photo Caption) 1993, Minority Affairs Committee Meeting; PA Peggy Valentine at podium, held during AAPA Conference in Miami, FL.

Also, please read the series of articles that PAHx Trustee John Davis created on the history of the AAPA Minority Affairs Committee and African Heritage Caucus. They have been compiled into an exhibit that can [be read here](#).

(President's Message, continued from page 1)

with other providers. We mentor one another, we support one another and know the importance of keeping that enthusiasm alive. I still get excited to meet new PAs. History has served us well, and we must be vigilant to continue our success.

Our profession's success could easily have been derailed if the right decisions had not been made, if

corners had been cut, or difficult conversations had not happened. We followed our own newly created path which did not always conform to what others thought it should be. For over 50 years, courage has served PAs well as the profession has developed and evolved. I look forward to seeing what lies ahead.

**In Her Own Words:
Bruna Varalli-Claypool, BBA, MHS,
PA-C**

Lori Konopka-Sauer, PAHx Managing Director

Bruna Varalli-Claypool, BBA, MHS, PA-C, has served the PA profession as a clinician, an educator, and this year, she begins her first three-year term on the PA History Society's Board of Trustees. Her PAHx biography may be found [here](#). HH has asked Bruna more personal questions. Her answers follow in her own words.



What attracted you to a medical career, first becoming an EMT and then a PA?

I don't really know why I chose medicine, but my older sister was in nursing school completing her BSN at the time I graduated from high school. Wanted to be like my big sister? The same but different? I took an EMT course when I graduated from high school in 1977 while attending LPN school. The state of Wisconsin had to decide if I would be able to take the EMT-Basic course because I was only 17 years old at the time. "They" decided I could take the course, because I would be 18 by the time I tested for certification. I ran my first ambulance call when I was 17 years old and continued on to EMT-Paramedic school and EMS work for many years because it was just so damn cool.

(In Her Own Words, continued on page 3)

(In Her Own Words, continued from page 2)

I first heard about the PA profession from one of my medic colleagues in Wisconsin in the early 1980s. I thought why would you want to leave all this kind of medicine and go to PA school? Fast forward many years later and I'm teaching EMS and Health Occupations courses in the vocational education system in Oklahoma and thinking about what's next. Like many who choose the PA profession, I made the pro and con list for PA vs MD/DO school. PA school appealed to me for several reasons:

- 1) I was a nontraditional student (read...old).
- 2) I did not want to spend 4 years in medical school and then at least another 3 years of a residency before I could practice medicine.
- 3) The lateral mobility of the profession, although I am one of those PAs that hasn't been too mobile. Emergency Medicine, Primary and Urgent Care and now Academia with Student and Employee Health clinical practice.
- 4) What I could do as a PA verses what a physician can do in Oklahoma made my PA school decision very easy.

What advice do you have for someone considering the PA profession?

Run...don't walk to get your application completed for the next program application deadline.

How did you get involved with the Indian Territory Texas Longhorn Association (ITTLA)?

My husband and I raise registered Texas Longhorn cattle on our 80-acre farm in Oklahoma, so connecting and maintaining connections with other longhorn breeders is essential.

What is their mission?

The ITTLA is an affiliate organization of the International Texas Longhorn Association (ITLA). The ITLA's purpose is "...the development, registration and promotion of the Texas Longhorn breed of cattle..." Although the Indian Territory affiliate works hard on yearly events, our real motto is "...if it's not fun...we're not doing it..."



Bruna's husband Randy on their farm with one of their Texas Longhorns named Red.

What are you looking forward to as you begin your first term on the PA History Society board?

Researching the history of the profession in more detail and passing on that information to PA students. I was particularly energized about the history of my profession after meeting Ken Ferrell at PAEA in Anaheim (2018). I'm planning on the return of my "monthly mindbender" questions to my PA students. This time, the questions will focus on the history of our profession."



Bruna, Ken Ferrell, Darlla Duniphin at PAEA (Anaheim 2018).

What have you been doing to remain socially distanced from family and friends during the pandemic?

Working from home at the same time as my husband, trying to maintain the wi-fi connection by preserving the sight line from our dish to the service provider's antennae on the water tower. "...farm livin' is the life for me..."

What makes you laugh?

Watching my 3-year-old grandson "shave" like his daddy with a popsicle stick.



Bruna's daughter-in-law Rachel, son EJ and grandson Neal.

(In Her Own Words, continued on page 4)

(In Her Own Words, continued from page 3)

Do you have any pets?

Yes, we have a little red healer named Fiona. I keep saying I'm going to write a children's book and title it *Fierce Fiona*.

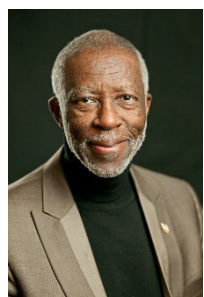


Bruna's family pet, Fiona



Society Board Elects New Officers

During the November 2020 PAHx Board meeting, the Society Board members elected Trustee **Stephen D. Wilson**, PA-C, as President Elect. Trustee Wilson joined the Board of Trustees in 2015. He has also held the officer position of Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Wilson is a 1974 graduate from Alderson-Broadbush College, the first four-year degree PA program. You can read more about Mr. Wilson from his biography featured on the [PAHx website](#).



The Society Board members also elected Trustee **John J. Davis**, PA-C, DFAAPA, as Treasurer-Secretary. Trustee Davis joined the PAHx Board in 2015 as the NCCPA appointed member. Mr. Davis is a 1973 graduate from the Duke University PA program. You can read more about Mr. Davis from his biography featured on the [PAHx website](#).

Trustees Wilson and Davis join the PAHx Executive Committee with Board President Debi Gerbert and NCCPA/PAHx CEO Dawn Morton-Rias.

Three New Trustees Begin Board Service in 2021

The Board of Directors of the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants approved three new members of the PAHx Board of Trustees during their November 2020 meeting. The new board members will fill the vacancies created by Immediate Past President Maryann Ramos, MPH, PA-C Emeritus, Robert Wooten, PA-C, DFAAPA, and Marilyn H. Fitzgerald, Honorary PA, whose terms of service concluded at the end of 2020. We thank Maryann, Robert and Marilyn for their years of service.

Bill Kohlhepp, DHSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, has been a PA for 42 years. He graduated from the Rutgers/UMDNJ PA program and immediately became involved with advocating for PA licensure in New Jersey. Dr. Kohlhepp began his PA career in Emergency Medicine and then joined the faculty at Quinnipiac University in 1996 where he currently serves as a Professor Emeritus in the PA program. You can read more about Dr. Kohlhepp's career from his biography featured on the [PAHx website](#).



David Kuhns, PA-C Emeritus, CCPA Retired, DFAAPA, MPH, served as a Medical Service Technician in the US Air Force and then as an Aeromedical Evacuation Technician as an Active Reservist. Mr. Kuhns retired after 40 years as a PA serving in both the clinical and academic fields. During his involvement with Doctors Without Borders, Mr. Kuhns started working overseas and there his international PA career began. You can read more about Mr. Kuhns's career from his biography which will soon be posted on the [PAHx website](#).



(New Trustees, continued on page 5)

(New Trustees, continued from page 4)

Bruna Varalli-Claypool, BBA, MHS, PA-C, has been a PA for 22 years. She graduated from the University of Oklahoma's PA program where she currently serves as an Associate Professor. She has served the university in a variety of roles, including Didactic Curriculum Coordinator, Director of Admissions, Interim Director for Didactic Education, Principal Teaching Faculty, Preceptor Recruitment and Retention, and ID/IPE Program Faculty Coordinator. You can read more about Ms. Varalli-Claypool's career from her biography on the [PAHx website](#).



Archiving in a Pandemic

*Michelle Schabowski, MSIS, CA,
PAHx Archivist*

The PA History Society has been fortunate to be able to continue our work of preserving PA history during this COVID-19 Pandemic. Through our website, the "face" of the PAHx, we are still able to interact with the PA community and answer the questions of researchers, PA educators, and PA students. Our Trustees and Historians have created new and interesting articles and exhibits while working from home to help share PA history with our constituents. To view our exhibit page, [please click here](#).

We are still accepting and processing donations! If you are cleaning out your closets this spring and find any PA documents, items, issues of PA journals, or photographs that you would like to donate to the PA History Society, please contact us at: contactus@pahx.org

In the past, the PA History Society has conducted the majority of our oral history interviews at the national AAPA and PAEA conferences. Thankfully, technology has allowed us to stay connected and we've added several new interviews to our oral

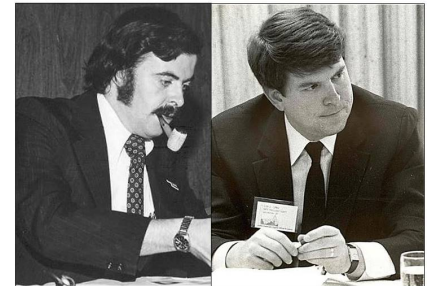
history collection! You may watch the videos that have been added on our [Featured Oral Histories Webpage](#).

We are still collecting stories from PAs who have once served as Navy Corpsmen or as medics either before they became PAs or as PAs for a special project with the Maine Military Museum. If you would like to share your story with the PA History Society, please email as at: contactus@pahx.org

Remembering Dr. Hu Myers: A Shared Memoir from William Stanhope and Glen Combs

*Reginald Carter, PhD, PA
PAHx Historian Emeritus*

I [Reginald Carter] had the opportunity to conduct a teleconferenced oral history interview with William Stanhope and Glen Combs about the time they spent at Alderson-Broadus College (now University) in Philippi, West Virginia under the tutelage of general surgeon, Hu Myers MD. Dr. Hu, as he was affectionately called, established the first physician assistant (PA) program that offered a bachelor's degree to graduates at AB College in 1968. Stanhope was a PA teaching fellow at Alderson-Broadus (AB) College from 1969 to 1970, while Combs was a PA student and later a house officer at AB College and the Myers Clinic/Broadus Hospital from 1971 to 1975. With Dr. Myers' support and mentorship, the learning opportunities afforded by Stanhope and Combs were unparalleled, given them confidence and experiences that would later shape their academic and clinical careers as PAs. When asked what it was like living in Philippi, WV, Stanhope said that he had grown up in rural Maine, so except for the geography and topography, the community did not seem all that different. However,



William Stanhope and Glen Combs
Pioneering PA Educators and Leaders

(Dr. Hu Myers, continued on page 6)

(Dr. Hu Myers, continued from page 5)

it was the dire poverty associated with the region that made the place different clinically. Combs on the other hand had lived in California, so when he arrived at his destination, he thought he was “entering a new world.” He was in cultural shock, but soon learned to love the coal mining community and unique college campus located on top of the hill where the first amputation of the Civil War occurred. For Stanhope, Myers was the consummate physician. Although a general surgeon, Myers treated patients with all types of general internal medicine and primary care problems. Comb’s first impression of Dr. Hu was that he was “soft-spoken, articulate and a southern gentleman with a lot of wisdom.” Myers

was very involved with the curriculum, promoting the PA concept throughout the state and was interested in students doing their best.



Dr. Hu Myers in Operating Room with Surgical Team – 1970s

Stanhope says while in Philippi, he learned to appreciate social medicine and the need for all Americans to have access to equitable and reasonable healthcare resources. The confidence he gained while in WV led him to become the first director of the Oklahoma University PA program. He made sure that the students in his PA program had clinical experiences in medically disadvantaged communities. Combs also found the experience at AB to develop his confidence, especially having someone of Dr. Myers’ stature as a mentor. When he became the Director of the PA Program at Wake Forest University, Combs tried to emulate the qualities he saw in Myers and instill these qualities in his students.

You can access an article summarizing Stanhope’s and Comb’s remembrances of Philippi WV, Alderson-Broaddus College and Dr. Hu by clicking on the following link: <https://pahx.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Remembering-Philippi-West-Virginia-Alderson-Broaddus-College-and-Dr.->

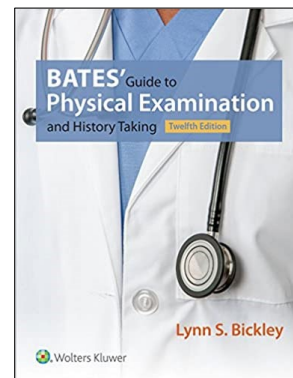
[Hu-Myers.pdf](#). The article contains many interesting stories about Stanhope’s and Comb’s experiences as novice PAs who felt the pressure to always do their best because they were to be role models for the PA profession. Since no one knew what a PA was supposed to do, they were allowed to do more than most PA students get to do today.

The recorded interview and edited transcript conducted on October 8, 2020 can be accessed at: <https://pahx.pastperfectonline.com/archive/824308D3-661B-42E2-A022-627339197755>.

The History of Bates’ Guide to Physical Examination

Henry H. “Hank” Heard, DHSc, PA-C Emeritus

When you were beginning PA school, one of your first courses of study was physical diagnosis. In fact, the study of physical examination and history taking remains a cornerstone of physician assistant education today. The book you probably used for your study was *Bates’ Guide to Physical Examination*. Bates’ book has been the “industry standard” for learning physical diagnosis techniques for decades. Did you ever wonder who is this Bates, when was this book first written, how and why was this book first conceived, and what made this book so special that this year marks its 47th year of continuous publication with its thirteenth edition? Below is the surprising story of Barbara Bates, M.D., internist and author, and her involvement with furthering the development of the nurse practitioner concept.



Barbara Bates grew up in Auburn, NY, the daughter of a physician father and nurse mother. Her undergraduate education was at Smith College, while her medical education was at the Cornell University Weill Medical College, where she graduated in 1953.

(Barbara Bates, continued on page 7)

(Barbara Bates, continued from page 6)

She completed an Internal Medicine residency at New York Hospital and Cornell Medical College and in 1958 began an active medical practice in Connecticut. By 1967, Dr. Bates had become involved with teaching medical residents at the University of Rochester School of Medicine in western New York. She excelled at teaching and was noted to be particularly adept at diagnosing maladies using physical examination skills and critical thinking. Both medical and nursing students benefited from her expertise. As a result of her teaching, Dr. Bates became an early advocate of the “Interdisciplinary Practice” concept and developed a special interest in the problems with rural medical practice. Dr. Bates believed that nurses could share some of the responsibilities of patient care with physicians, and as a result, she combined the teaching of nurses and medical students. She received numerous teaching awards in the field of nursing,



which ultimately led to her involvement with nurse practitioners and further developing their roles in medicine.

Photo Caption: Barbara Bates at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine, teaching physical examination skills, ca. 1977 Photo credit: Joan E. Lynaugh, Ph.D.

By 1970, Dr. Bates did not believe that the then current physical diagnosis texts were user friendly for the students. She formed a small group of like-minded medical and nursing professionals who helped her formulate and develop a new book. The first edition was aimed specifically at nurse practitioner students; it had hand-drawn illustrations, totaled 375 pages and was published in 1974.

Dr. Bates was an amateur bird watcher and used Roger Tory Peterson’s field guides to identify the species she saw. Peterson’s books were unique in that the main text was printed on one side of the page

while a sidebar of specific useful information was written on the right in red ink. Dr. Bates adopted this style for the new physical diagnosis book. In each section of the book she included one section on the pertinent anatomy and physiology of the exam, another section on the techniques of the exam, and a final section on selected abnormalities commonly found. Lippincott, the noted nursing book publisher, printed her first edition. When buying the book, the student could also obtain “12 sound motion pictures based on the text”. Innovative and unusual with its highlighted areas written in red and the availability of videos to reinforce learning, the book was an instant success, particularly within the nursing community.

Barbara Bates died in 2002 at the age of 74 of Alzheimer’s disease. The current edition of her book has 1,201 pages, an interactive question bank, 18 volumes of head-to-toe exam videos, and 15 clinical skills videos focused on Objective Structured Clinical Examinations preparation. There is little wonder why Bates’ book is still the “go-to” book in the field of physical diagnosis for the last half century.

References

Bates, B., Hoekelman, R.A. Bates’ A guide to physical examination. Philadelphia, PA: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1974.

Bickley, L.S., Szilagyi, P.G., Hoffman, R.M., Soriano, R.P. Bates’ guide to physical examination and history taking. 13th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Wolters Kluwer, 2021.

Biography: Barbara Bates, changing the face of medicine. https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_25.html. Accessed February 5, 2021.



Stay in Touch with PAHx thru Social Media!

Please be sure to “like” PA History Society on [Facebook](#) to receive updates and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

The Creation of the Society's Chipper Wallet Comic Book

*Reginald Carter, PhD, PA
PAHx Historian Emeritus*

An email sent from me to the Executive Committee of the PA History Society on December 5, 2007 informed them that Alice Singleton at Tribune Media Services had called to say the Tribune was interested in working with the Society to produce a Chipper Wallet, PA-C comic book. This was a project the Society's Board had been

discussing for several years. But timing is everything and due to other pressing issues, the Society's Board decided to table further discussion of the comic strip project on March 31, 2008.

According to Winston Churchill, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." In the case of the special edition comic book, the delay in publishing it was worth the wait. It provided time for Chipper's story to come full-circle, just in time for the celebration of the PA Profession's 50th Anniversary.

In 2016, I was asked to contact Jim Scancarelli, the current cartoonist for Gasoline Alley, to determine if he would draw a poster of Chipper Wallet, PA-C for the Society to use in its 50th PA

Anniversary Toolkit. Chipper was a leading character in the comic strip who became a pioneering PA in the 1970s. The poster had Chipper, now age 72, congratulating "All of us PAs" on the



Chipper as Hospital Corpsman
Vietnam - January 2, 1968



50th anniversary of the PA Profession. Not only did Scancarelli agree to do the poster drawing but also to bring Chipper back into the comic strip as a way of informing the public about physician assistants and their 50 years of providing high quality medical services. The daily syndicated strip featuring Chipper ran from the fall of 2016 to the spring of 2017. Chipper even appears in the comic strip as a guest speaker at the PAHx rededication ceremony of the PA Veterans Garden in April 2017. It was fun working with Jim on the story line, and we still stay in touch routinely – just to chat.

I worked with Michelle Schabowski, MSIS, CA, the Society's archivist, to identify 60 comic strips from the 1960s and 1970s that feature Chipper as a hospital corpsman in Vietnam and later as he became a physician assistant.

The historical strips drawn by Dick Moores and Jim Scancarelli's more recent strips combined to tell a tantalizing story filled with drama, laughs and interesting characters. The Society signed an agreement with Tribune Content Agency, LLC in December 2016, and printed the comic book in time for the May 2017 AAPA annual meeting held in Las Vegas, NV. After the strips ran in newspapers, Scancarelli donated his original ink drawings to the PAHx Society's archives.



Scancarelli signing comic book for Carter

Only 10 copies of the limited-edition comic books remain. Last chance to get your piece of PA history before they are gone!

The Chipper comic books are available for purchase at: <https://pahx.org/comic-book/>.

You can access Chipper Wallet's biography at: <https://pahx.org/assistants/wallet-thomas-walter-chipper/>.

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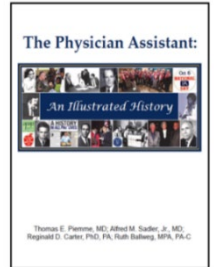
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Looking for a Good Book to Read this Month?

Check out the Society's offerings

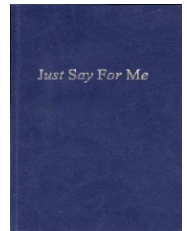
The Physician Assistant: An Illustrated History

Flip through the history of the many people, places, and events that 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. It is an excellent educational resource for anyone interested in learning about the history of the PA profession.



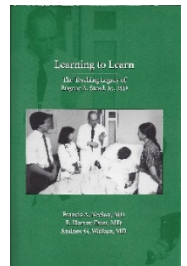
Just Say for Me

The little blue book of "Steadisms," is a collection of inspiring thoughts on medical care by Dr. Eugene A. Stead, Jr. founder of the PA profession. This small booklet is packed with 342 quotes from Dr. Stead regarding his philosophies about health care, medical education, patient care and much more! It's also a great gift for students during their white coat ceremony or PA graduation.

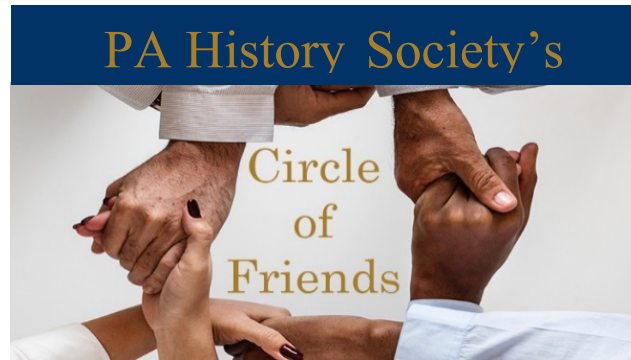


Learning to Learn: The Teaching Legacy of Eugene A. Stead, Jr., MD

This book traces the teaching legacy of one of America's most gifted medical educators: Dr. Eugene Stead, founder of the PA profession. The heart of Stead's legacy is a handful of principles that are as essential today as they were 53 years ago.



For more information on these PA history books, please click on this link: [PA History Books](#)



Join Your Colleagues and Become a “Lifetime Friend in the Circle of Friends”

Lifetime Circle of Friends: Ruth Ballweg, Reginald Carter, Marilyn Fitzgerald, Gino Gianola, J. Jeffrey Heinrich, William Kohlhepp, William Marquardt, Maryann Ramos, Alfred M. Sadler, Jr., Blair L. Sadler, Shepard Stone and Greg P. Thomas

Help preserve PA history by becoming a ***Lifetime Friend*** of the Society. “***Lifetime***” ***Circle of Friends Giving Levels:*** a one-time donation of \$2,000 or more from individuals under the age 65 years, OR a one-time donation of \$1,000 or more from individuals retired or age 65 years and older.

If you’re not in the “Lifetime” category ... don’t worry, you can still support the work of the PAHx and join the “**Annual**” ***Circle of Friends*** with a donation of \$100 or more each year.

2021 Annual Circle of Friends: Debi Gerbert, Dawn Morton-Rias, Dick Rensch and Robert Wooten

Honor the PA Profession with a Lasting Gift to the ***PAHx Legacy Circle***

By planning your future gifts now, you are helping to ensure that the history of the PA profession is never forgotten. Legacy gifts – whether large or small – combine to create a vision for the future of the PA History Society, ensuring the continued vitality of its mission. ***Types of planned giving:*** Bequest specified in your will or trust; qualified retirement plan; or life insurance policy.



All donations to both of these PAHx giving programs assist the PA History Society with:

- ❖ Preserving the Archives collection
- ❖ Developing educational materials (history books, toolkits)
- ❖ Scanning materials for digital use
- ❖ Expanding our biography and oral history collection
- ❖ Providing student scholarships to attend PAHx educational programs (example: PA Historian Boot Camp)



For more information about these programs, please visit our website www.pahx.org or send us an email contactus@pahx.org.

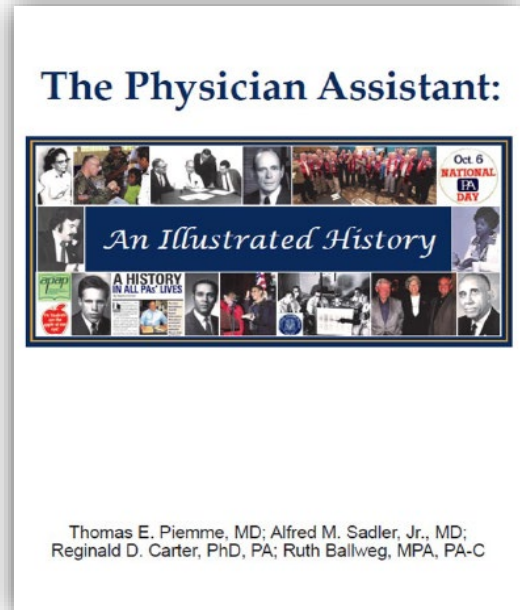
The Physician Assistant: *An Illustrated History*

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.

Special Pricing for PA Programs, PAs and Constituent Organizations:

\$12 each (retail price \$15.95) + shipping

- **\$10 each plus shipping & packaging for orders of 15 or more books**



Quantity: _____ x \$12 (\$10 bulk) + shipping *

***A single book purchase is \$12 + \$3.75 for shipping = \$15.75**

*If you are purchasing **multiple books**, please email the office for your shipping total.
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shipping charges from the PAHx office.*

An eBook version of *The Physician Assistant: An Illustrated History* is available for your Kindle through Amazon.com by [clicking here](#).

Credit Card Payments can be made via
PayPal on the PAHx website at:
<http://www.pahx.org/pa-history-book>

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