



Historical Happenings

Newsletter of the Physician Assistant History Society

A Message from the President

Thomas E. Piemme, MD

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have served as president of the Physician Assistant History Society during these past two extraordinary years. Early in my professional career, I learned that success came from being in the right place at the right time, and having the opportunity to collaborate with creative, energetic colleagues.

The Society had been struggling to find its footing when I learned that the leadership of the NCCPA would be willing to provide a home, and financial stability. Through the efforts of Bill Marquardt, president at the time, we were able to transfer our functions and archives from Durham to new offices in Atlanta in the complex that already housed both the NCCPA and ARC-PA. During this transition, taking advantage of relationships that Fred Sadler had established years ago, Fred and I visited several foundations in New York, and were able to secure funding for the Society from the Robert Wood Johnson and Josiah Macy Foundations.

Given the security of the new relationship, and the stimulus of external funding, the Society has been able to flourish with fruitful initiatives and tangible accomplishments.

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Dawn Morton-Rias to Become Executive Director of the History Society

Earlier this month, NCCPA announced its new president/CEO, Dawn Morton-Rias, EdD, PA-C, the first PA to lead the organization as CEO. As part of her role and responsibility, she will become an *ex-*

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officio Trustee, and the executive director of the Physician Assistant History Society, as well.

Next year, Ms. Morton-Rias will leave her position as dean of the College of Health Related Professions at SUNY Downstate. She is a graduate of the Howard University PA Program. She is a former president of PAEA, and serves as a commissioner of ARC-PA. A provider of community-based primary care and GYN services in New York City, she has served on the New York State Board of Medicine, and has been involved in Federal service as a member of the HRSA Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry.

Ms. Morton-Rias is a recipient of a Fulbright Senior Specialist Award from the State Department, and is the first non-physician to be recognized by the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health.

The elected Trustees and the staff of the PA History Society welcome our new leader, who will begin her new position in June 2014.

A Message from the President

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Organization of the Archives: Shortly after the archives arrived in Atlanta, Historian Emeritus, Reginald Carter, under contract with the Society, began the arduous task of organizing the collection. Books, journals, and other manuscripts were inventoried, and shelved. Over the past two years, more than a thousand papers, policy statements, and items of correspondence have been cataloged, and entered into a searchable database. Aided at first by students, and, more recently, by Jeff Martineck, a media specialist, employed as our archivist, Carter has developed finding aids, and is currently working to create an “Educational Tool Kit” for distribution to programs.

Quest for Source Documents: With foundation funding, Fred Sadler and I have been able to spend quality time at AAPA and PAEA, as well as time in Atlanta with the records of the NCCPA and ARC-PA, in search of source documents related to the founding and development of these organizations. Documents include minutes of meetings, policy papers, and correspondence. We have visited the American Medical Association, the National Board of Medical Examiners, and the National Library of Medicine, as well, gaining access to material relevant to the establishment of the profession in the 1960s and 1970s. What we have gathered, and have continued access to, will, when collated, add immeasurably to our historic archives.

Audiovisual Analog to Digital Conversion: Contained within the archives are hundreds of hours of video- and audio-tapes of conferences, presentations, and interviews; and thousands of photographs of historical significance. With the help of an anonymous donation from a small family foundation, we have been able to convert all of this

to digital format that resides on a hard-drive and is currently being cataloged.

Establishment of “Associate” Status: The History Society exists as a resource to educational programs, to our affiliated governing organizations, and to all those who will be interested in the history of the PA profession. In order to accomplish that mission, the Society will require sustained sources of revenue. As an initial step, we established a distinction, termed “Associate,” for those PA programs, and AAPA constituent organizations which pay an annual fee to the Society. Associates receive benefits that have been well described in prior issues of this newsletter. Since the inception of this program three years ago, the percentage of programs participating has grown to budgeted expectations for the first time this past fiscal year.

Evolution of a Robust Website: Early in the affiliation of the Society with the NCCPA, an intensive effort was made to revise and enhance the quality of interface, and the scope of content of the PAHx.org website. On a rotating schedule, “Associates” are featured on the home page with links to their own websites.

The number of exhibits has been greatly expanded; the number of biographies has more than tripled. Most importantly, the “Timeline” has

been substantively revised for accuracy and relevance. New items are added as events unfold. Within the past month, the audiovisual component of the website now features streaming video of elements chosen from our newly digitized collection. With all of these enhancements, use of the website has grown exponentially.



Revival of the Newsletter: After a lapse of several years, the Newsletter of the History Society has been revived, and distributed to all certified physician assistants. We hope you find it interesting and useful.

Published History of the Profession: Perhaps our proudest achievement of the past two years is the publication of *The Physician Assistant: An Illustrated History*. As the first book devoted to the history of the PA concept since 1972, it is proving to be popular and useful to programs that have purchased it for distribution to their students.

As I indicated at the outset, success over these two years has come as a byproduct of collaboration. Pam Dean, our executive director and acting CEO, has been enormously supportive, serving us well with her advice, and as our interface with the Commission. Lori Konopka-Sauer has been an outstanding managing director. Unfailingly pleasant and diplomatic, she is consistently reliable. Her attention to detail is astonishing. Keri Caudill is a magician with her command of graphics, and master of the website. As our new archivist, Jeff Martineck has proven to be a superb addition, greatly enhancing access to our enormous database. Linda King has provided exceptional administrative support.

Ruth Ballweg and Reg Carter, our esteemed historians, have been invaluable to the Society. Without them, none of our accomplishments would have been realized. Their knowledge, integrity, and dedication provide the infrastructure to the organization of the archives, the content of the website, and pages of our book. Each of the Trustees of the Society has made substantive contribution to the mission, willingly giving their time and effort to the history of the profession.

My greatest pleasure has been the opportunity to collaborate again with Fred Sadler. Forty years ago we worked together to create what is now PAEA, to plan and conduct the "First Annual Conference" of PAs in Wichita Falls, Texas, and to raise the funds

and establish the first "National Office" for both AAPA and PAEA. Those events of 1972-73 and the opportunity to rejuvenate the PA History Society in 2012-13 provide nice bookends to careers that have been substantively involved with the PA profession.

Fred now assumes the presidency of the Society's Board of Trustees. It is happening at the same time that a new leader, Dawn Morton-Rias, will be assuming the role of president/CEO of NCCPA in June 2014, and, therefore, the role of executive director of the Society. I am confident in their ability to lead the Society to new heights.

Finally, I wish all of our readers a great holiday season.

Early PA Leaders Reunite at Baylor Commencement

**Alfred M. Sadler, Jr., MD, and
E. Carl Fasser, PA**

It was a reunion of two of the long time leaders of the PA Profession, when Dr. Sadler, president of the PA History Society, delivered the Commencement Address on December 7, 2013 to the 40th graduating class of the Baylor PA Program at the request of Program Director and Professor Carl Fasser, PA. Included in the ceremony was the first graduation class of the new DNP Nurse Anesthesia Program at Baylor. Sadler and Fasser have known each other since the early 1970s when they were allies in



**Alfred M. Sadler Jr., MD and
Carl Fasser, PA
December 7, 2013 - 40th graduating class
of the Baylor PA Program**

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developing APAP, national accreditation and certification, and the first annual meeting of PAs in 1973 at Wichita Falls, Texas.

In his address, Dr. Sadler stressed three aspects of giving that we health professionals are blessed to be able to participate in throughout our careers: first, our gift to patients through our service to them; second, their gift to us through their gratitude and appreciation; and third, our opportunity to serve our broader community in countless ways.

Professor Fasser was the founding director of the Baylor PA Program and has lead the Program through to the present except for a five year period, when he was recruited away to start the PA Program at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. He is a widely published author, a former member of the Board of Trustees of the PA History Society, and an active leader of the Profession, having twice served as president of AAPA, and also as president of PAEA.

It was a festive occasion attended by the leaders of the Baylor College of Medicine, faculty and the families of the 35 PA and 18 DNP graduates. They will be among the new generation of highly trained professionals who will help write the next chapter of health care in the United States.

Witness to History: Two Encounters with John F. Kennedy

In an essay entitled, *My Two Days with JFK*, John Braun, PA, MPH, a founding member of AAPA, and its third president, describes two memorable occasions on which Kennedy touched his life. The first occurred in 1960 when, as a high school senior in Miami, Braun was waiting for a bus to his after-school job as the motorcade of the Senator, then a presidential candidate, crossed his path on its way to a campaign rally. "I felt an instant connection," as they made eye contact. The second, a more somber occasion, occurred on November 22, 1963. Braun was an operating room technician when news of the

assassination came over the loudspeaker at Bethesda Naval Hospital. Without explanation, he was sent to the morgue with surgical instruments. Early that evening, he witnessed the arrival of the hearse, and realized the purpose of his earlier task. Shortly thereafter, he was present in the rotunda of the hospital when he was asked by Defense Secretary McNamara to greet dignitaries as they arrived to visit the family. Later that weekend, he witnessed the transfer of the coffin from the White House to the Capitol.

Read the entire moving account as an exhibit on the PAHx website: see [My Two Days with JFK](#).

Preserving Your Institutional History

Reginald D. Carter, PhD, PA, Historian Emeritus



William Tozier, Ruth Ballweg and Rod Hooker, Workshop 2005

documents, artifacts, and memorabilia related to the development and evolution of its own institutional history. An important role of the PA History

Each PAEA member program, and each AAPA constituent organization should have a designated historian to oversee the retention and preservation of important

Society is to work closely with each organization's historian to assure that materials are being collected, processed, and maintained according to accepted archival standards.

This coming year, the Society will contact our Associates to request that they name an "institutional" historian with whom we can work closely to assure that the institution's history is being preserved and maintained appropriately. We are developing a reference guide for each historian and will provide workshops at upcoming national meetings, or at the Society office in Johns Creek, Ga., to develop the historian's knowledge and skills about retaining and preserving important documentation.

Our vision is that the institution's historian will become a local, regional and national advocate to achieve the Society's mission to share the history of the development of the PA profession and illustrate how PAs continue to make a difference in our society. The institutional historian will be the main liaison between the Society and organization's leadership keeping both informed of ongoing activities and opportunities for collaboration on PA history related projects. The historians will also provide the Society a resource of potential individuals to serve on task force groups, ad hoc committees and the Society's Board of Trustees.

We encourage each PA program and constituent organization to become a Society Associate, appoint an institutional historian, and become involved in the important work that lies ahead.

Visit our website, and see what's "new" in PA history!

www.pahx.org



Happy Holidays from your friends at the

PA History Society!



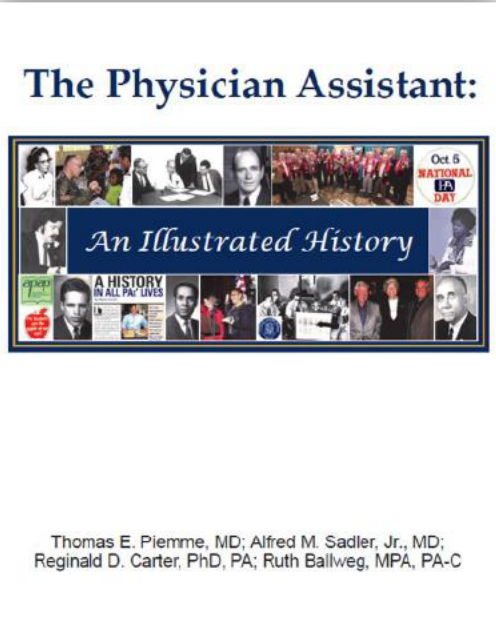
The Physician Assistant: *An Illustrated History*

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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