

Doctoring in Nevada

Read the stories of over fifty doctors who have practiced in Nevada since World War II. This is the latest book in our fourteen books on medicine in Nevada, and it is available at Sundance Books, Reno, or Nev. Hist. of Med. Foundation, 1640 Manzanita Lane, Reno, NV 89509 for \$25 plus \$3 shipping.

DOCTORING IN NEVADA is also available on Amazon Kindle books. Go to: <http://www.amazon.com> and in the search area enter *Doctoring in Nevada*.

Nevada EMS: A History of Emergency Medical Services in Nevada by Elwood Schmidt, MD, is in final preparation and a tentative printing date is April 15, 2014. The book contains 143 stories from all Nevada counties. Dr. Schmidt researched Nevada EMS development and interviewed more than 150 EMS personnel. Further information will be available at the website <NevadaEMSHistory.com>

Zabriske's Disinfectant Dr. Christian D. Zabriske

Anton P. Sohn, MD

Dr. Christian Bevoort Zabriske was no ordinary Polish descendent born in the USA; he had a dream to explore the unknown and help others overcome illness. He was born in Haversack, New Jersey on June 29, 1801, into a family that had emigrated from Poland in the 1660s. He received a medical degree from Columbia University in 1832; however, this vision led him west. He and son Elias moved to Jacksonville, Illinois, where he joined as a volunteer for the Mexican War in 1846. After the war he was back in New York as a surgeon for the California Union Association that had plans to go to the California goldfields.

Initially, landing in Panama with his fellow passengers, he found over 2,000 other travelers stranded and waiting for passage to California. The group raised \$6,000, bought a dilapidated schooner, and sailed up the coast to San Francisco. His brother, James, remained in California to practice law while Dr. Zabriske and son continued

to Silver City, Nevada Territory.

The 1862 Directory lists Dr. Zabriske as living on Second Street between High and Main with son Elias, an attorney. Various directories and advertisements during the 1860s and 1870s list seven additional doctors living or practicing in Silver City.

His patient ledgers start October 12, 1862 and shows appointments through October 4, 1868. Many of the notations were after midnight. Brennan's article in *The Nevadan* notes that Zabriske's fees ranged from \$2 to \$10, but his collections were about thirty percent. For example, during September 1863 his charges were \$1013.50 and payments were \$368. Brennan further notes, "By Cash (Greenbacks) \$70.00." To further add to his collection deficit woes, Greenbacks sold at the local banks for between 68 and 72¢ on the dollar.

Zabriske's ledgers give some insight into this practice. He used the lancet, as was the practice at the time,

to bleed patients. In addition, he used blistering, scarification, and cupping. Blistering was a procedure when blisters were produced by applying burning heat and lancing the blisters to drain fluid. Scarification resulted when a flat surfaced gadget with six or eight spring-loaded lancets pierced the skin or mucus membrane to produce oozing of blood or serum. To increase oozing a glass heated-cup was placed over the wounds to create suction.

Dr. Zabriske charged \$50 for a delivery and on one occasion he charged \$15 for delivering a placenta. Smallpox was a threat to nineteenth-century citizens of Nevada, and the doctor charged Lyon County for treating the illness. He also vaccinated patients to prevent the dreaded disease. The following was in the *Gold Hill Daily News* 12.11.1868:

Zabriske's Disinfectant—
Speaking of Chloride of lime, carbolic acid and other popular disinfectants, Dr. Zabriske says the best way to fortify against the smallpox is to eat plenty of good grub, keep your bowels in order, use a reasonable amount of choice whiskey, gin, brandy—whichever you prefer—and keep out of the way of the disease as

much as possible. The Doctor's head is pretty level, but what's a poor fellow like us to do who hasn't got any mouth for whiskey?

There was professional courtesy among doctors in Silver City. Zabriske and Dr. Sheldon McMeans amputated a badly broken leg after teamster Ezekiel W. Culliver splintered his leg in two places. On another occasion Dr. Zabriske set Joseph Todman's broken femur and charged \$50. He consulted with Dr. Minneer regarding Todman and after seven visits found it necessary to perform a "bleeding." He sometimes used a starch bandage to immobilize a fracture. His ledger showed that he charged \$50 for syphilis treatment. He treated fourteen cases of syphilis (three were secondary syphilis) and eight cases of gonorrhea.

Dr. Christian Zabriske died at the Reno Asylum November 1886, and Candelaria's *True Fissure* noted in an obituary:

Dr. Zabriske... represented Lyon Co. in Republican conventions many times. An able physician, possessed of a gigantic brain, one of the handsomest men the writer ever saw.

in Austin took two days. Gunn responded with the below letter and prescription.

The Roberts state that Rhonan survived the injury.

Notes on Rhonan's treatment:

Dover Powder is a traditional medicine that was developed by Thomas Dover, an eighteenth-century British physician, for colds and fever. It contained ipecac, opium, lactose, and morphine.

Blue Mass (also known as calomel) was a widely used nineteenth-century medicine that contained mercury chloride (a toxic substance) and blue chalk. President Lincoln was known to use it for unknown reasons.

Catechu is an extract of the acacia tree and is an astringent that was frequently used in the 1800s.

Magnesia is an ingredient of Milk of Magnesium and is a laxative and antacid.

Quinine, an extract from the bark of the Peruvian Cinchona tree, has an interesting history. It has been used for hundreds of years to successfully eliminate the fever and chills of malaria by killing the organism but it was not effective to treat any other cause of fever and chills. Malaria was prevalent in the Sacramento Delta and brought to Nevada by miners. Quinine was efficacious if malaria was the cause. Unfortunately, the malaria was not the cause of Rhonan's fever and chills. In addition, quinine was expensive and not always available. (The editors maintain that quinine will cure what ails you if used with ice, gin, and a slice of lime in a drink known as gin and tonic.)

An 1887 Treatment For a Bone Marrow Infection

Anton P. Sohn, MD

Mr. Allen and Mrs. Karen Roberts of Fallon sent a copy of the below four-page letter to the editors that Dr. Gunn sent with instructions on how to treat Rhonan in 1887. Allen is the great grandson of 'Nellie' Goldbach, who was helping Rhonan's father, Frank Brotherton, care for his children. The Goldbachs homesteaded the Barley Creek Ranch in Monitor Valley.

Dr. John William Gunn graduated from Cooper Medical School in San

Francisco and registered with the Lander County Recorder's Office in 1886 to practice in the area. In the described situation he treated a young man who had a compound fracture (bones protruding through the skin) of the lower extremity after falling off a horse. From the letter, Dr. Gunn was treating him for a bone marrow infection (osteomyelitis). The letter from Brotherton in Belmont to Dr. Gunn

Dr. Gunn's Letter

Austin Nev. May 29/87

F. R. Brotherton Esq.
Belmont
Dear Sir.

Yours of 27th to hand and noted. From your description of Rhonan's condition should say without a doubt, he has blood poison.

Symptoms ought to be besides pain you describe. Pulse 100 or more. Fever Resp 20 to 40. Coated tongue bowels loose. Chill sweats Sweet breath perhaps cough and stained sputa.

Delirium, you say he has stupor. Bad signs are accumulation on teeth and gums, jerking, picking bed cloths etc. Some of these symptoms will be present. Chances are very much against recovery. Longer you can keep him alive, better.

Treatment – nothing special. If constipated & tongue coated 5 grs Blue Mass followed by magnesia in 6 hrs. Do not give if bowels loose. Give 5 grs quinine every 3 hours with this or at intervals of 4 hrs. 20 drops Tinch. Iron in water. If diarrhea is present do not try to check until it becomes exhaustive. Then use 20 drops of Laudanum with one oz. of Tr. Catechu & Chalk.

If pain severe 10 gr Dover powder or 1/6 gr Morph. Repeated in 2 to 6 hours as required,

If very weak may give 5 grs of Ammonia Carbonate in milk every 2 – 4 hrs.

If cough troublesome 1/2 oz. of syr. sugar with the Ammonium. Besides the Quinine the most necessary is following.

Whisky 2 oz.

Milk 12 oz.

Lime water 8 oz.

Mix and give 1/4 every hr. or two. Day and night. This is more important than medicine. May change off to wine and beef tea etc.

Locally to wound. Apply solution of 7 1/2 grs Corrosive Sublimate to pint of water or 1 1/2 oz. Permanganate Potash to pint.

This is all you can do for him and probably this will not change result. As most all cases die.

You can let Ball and Deady read this and you can get medicine as occasionally requires.

Probably trouble began from inflammation of marrow of leg bones. Pains in bones and joints are quite characteristic. You will probably find that his water contains a little albumin. Enclose Rx for iron and quinine.

Yours truly

JW Gunn

Will send bill during week. Cannot get it sworn until after Memorial Day. Dr.
G

Give him opiates enough to control pain. May take longer than I have ordered. G

Dr. Sue Desmond to Lead the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Robert M. Daugherty, MD

On this occasion, we are relating a recent event involving a 1982 graduate of the University of Nevada School of

Medicine. Dr. Sue Desmond, 56, was named the CEO of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation,

one of the world's largest philanthropic organizations. In her goodbye message to her colleagues at the University of California, San Francisco, Dr. Desmond-Hellmann stated, "The Gates Foundation's credo that every person deserves the chance to lead a healthy and productive life resonates with my own life long philosophy, and my hope is that my leadership can contribute to creating a more equitable world." She will leave her position as Chancellor of UCSF to assume leadership of the Gates Foundation on May 1, 2014.

Jerry May, PhD, former Associate Dean of Students and Tom Kozel, PhD, former chair of microbiology believes that the 1982 class had exceptional students. Dr. May noted that Sue loved to excel and she was indeed an exceptional student.

Sue's classmate, Dr. Steve Mandaro, remembers that she was in the library every night until it closed and excelled in all aspects of the coursework. Any project she was given was always with done care and attention to detail. She even participated in the faculty roast and did a stellar job writing the script and playing the role of the nun in charge of St Mary's Hospital.

Philippe Bishop, 1993 UNSOM graduate and vice-president for clinical development at Genentech, spoke of how she helped build the company's first oncology clinical teams and called her "One of the most important and special people to work at Genentech." Philippe also talked about her involvement in helping to create one of the most important pipeline/biotechnology development organizations in the industry, which helped to earn her a spot on Fortune Magazine's Top 50 Most Powerful Women in Business. Devoting her life to her patients as well as being an excellent leader, she challenged those around her to think



Dr. Sue Desmond

beyond conventional boundaries. In Philippe's words, "She taught me what it means to have the courage to stand up on issues of importance, challenge the status quo, and disprove the doubters." Bishop believes that Sue will now have the opportunity to

pursue her lifetime passion/mission to help people by leading one of the most important philanthropic organizations and continuing to be a simply amazing person.

Cheryl Hug-English, Sue's classmate, remembers starting medical school in 1978 as a nervous group consisting of 48 people all wondering what the next four years would bring. After the group began to spend time together and got to know one another Cheryl said one thing was clear, "Sue was special. Her scores were always the highest and she had tremendous focus and an amazing intellectual curiosity. Even with her tremendous success Sue remained unpretentious and humble. She did not pursue medicine for fame or fortune. She pursued it with great desire to help people and make a difference."

It is obvious that School of Medicine faculty and classmates saw her potential that has over the past 32

years has given her tremendous success as a leader in medical research and education.

In addition to Sue's potential and abilities as a leader, she has displayed a level of compassion and empathy toward others in need. Professor of Medicine and Oncology Stephen Hall first met Sue as a student and came home one evening and announced to his wife, Annabelle, "I think I have the finest medical student I will ever see, and she wants to be an oncologist." Annabelle recalls that shortly after Steve's diagnosis of brain cancer, "He needed someone knowledgeable to talk to and Sue Desmond despite her duties as President of Genentech was there for him."

Clearly, all of us associated with the UNSOM are proud of what Sue Desmond has accomplished, but I believe we are proudest and pleased to know that she is the caring compassionate physician we all hope to be.