

**Volume XXXVIII, Number 1 | Spring 2024**



## Million Dollar Question for Our Readers

The History of Medicine Museum has a portion of Alexander Fleming's original Penicillin culture worth c. \$1,000,000. What do you suggest we do with it?



## Dr. Stan Shane

The Dr. Stan Shane Compassionate Care Student Award Endowment Fund was established by the University of Nevada Foundation in 2023. Stan spent more than 25 years as the chairman of Internal Medicine and Associate Dean at the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine. He was a devoted clinician and teacher, inspiring generations of students and residents to be caring and competent physicians and ensuring that patients received the care they needed and deserved. He retired in 2015 at the age of 82 years.

Often referred to as "The Doctors' Doctor," Stan was a favorite of medical students and a mentor to many. He loved teaching at the bedside. Among his many national and local honors, he was inducted as a Master of the American College of Physicians (ACP) in 2018. He was Governor of the Nevada Chapter of the ACP from 1998 - 2000 and received its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.

The endowment is established with cash gifts to UNR Foundation in memory of Dr. Stan Shane. An award shall be given to a student who exhibits compassion and empathy in patient care at the discretion of the Dean. Recipients must also demonstrate financial need.

## Dr. Owen Peck: (Born, 3/7/1925— Died, 9/7/2022)

By Erma Miller, Former UNR Med Dean R.M. Daugherty's Exec. Sec.

Since Dr. Fred Anderson was named "Father of the Medical school," I think of Dr. Owen Peck as "Grandfather of the Medical School." He was always there when we needed him, whether it was a student problem, faculty problem, or any question for which I needed an answer. He made many trips to Carson City, day or night, when someone in the Nevada Legislature had a medical problem. He served Nevada with humility and humanity in the best way.

## Dr. Owen Peck and Dr. Donald Pickering:

By Dr. Jeffery Tillim

Dr. Owen Peck, like Dr. John Davis, was very congenial and kind to me. He was a friend of Orvis School of Nursing Dean Marjorie Elmore. My mother was administrative secretary to Dean Elmore and subsequent four or five deans. In that way, I became acquainted with Dr. Peck, who was always affable, always interested in what others were doing to see if they were making progress in their endeavors. He believed one should always have achievement goals.

I want to comment on Dr. Donald Pickering. During my respiratory therapy years, he was the first and driving force of neonatology in Reno. He recruited Drs. A. Monibi, S. Missal, and M. Pokroy.

I remember when Dr. Monibi in 1980 was taking a newborn infant to San Francisco on a flight that crashed in the Sierras. I was on a similar flight to UCSF. For me the worst part was getting "car-sick" in the back of the ambulance on the drive from Moffitt Cancer Center to the Parnassus Campus.

Dr. Pickering was always trying to "invent" something, but really it was not for acclaim, it was to make it "better". He sometimes appeared gregarious. One highlight was his monthly "neonatal rounds" at which he presented case studies and discussed problems. I went with Kristin Laxalt, who was not a doctor at the time. Dr. Pickering invited guests, including Dr. Abraham Rudolph, chief pediatric cardiologist and chief of pediatrics at UCSF. Dr. Rudolph lectured on patent ductus arteriosus. He died about 6 months ago.

Dr. Pickering completed his career in Anchorage in 1982. His daughter, Kristina, was on the Nevada Supreme Court.

## UNR Med Savitt Medical Library History

By Joan S. Zenan, MLS, Director, Savitt Medical Library

The original Life and Health Sciences Library was established on the University of Nevada Reno campus in 1958. Savitt Medical Library was founded in July 1978 after the medical school converted to a four-year, degree-granting program. The collection moved from lower campus in 1980 into the new Sol and Ella Savitt Building at the School of Medicine. The first thing I did was install a lock at the library entrance.

The building and library are named in honor of Sol and Ella Savitt, who endowed the building and library. The Savitt Medical Library is a member of the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) network. NLM is the world's largest biomedical library that can access every bit of medical knowledge in the world.

The library evolved with NLM to develop on-line access to information. The medical school's Area Health Education Center (AHEC) was established via a federal grant in the late 1980s. AHEC Director Gerald Ackerman and I used an NLM innovation grant of \$250,000 to establish the school's computer-assisted medical information link. Fourteen or fifteen of Nevada's rural hospitals joined the network.

With computing support from Ed Nickel at Great Basin College, we mounted discs from NLM onto a network connected to computers. Using dial-up modems, rural physicians and medical students on rotations in outlying communities could now conduct their own online literature searches. Ackerman, Reference Librarian Terry Henner, and I went on the road to conduct training sessions for rural hospital personnel.

In 2002, the Savitt Medical Library moved into the Pennington Medical Education Building. I worked with the architectural design team to maximize the Library's space, and it was "absolutely spacious" when the new building opened. This included space for the history of medicine collection at the library's entrance of approximately 15 items collected by Dr. Fred Anderson. The collection was relocated in 2001 to the north end of library by Dr. Anton Sohn and renamed the Sohn Museum by Dean T.L. Schwenk. The Sohn

Museum has over 1,500 items representing Nevada's medical history. Also included is the Hood Library with over 900 books. The Library is named for the Six Doctors Hood, who practiced in Nevada from 1886 to 2002.

I enjoyed a 29-year career at Savitt Medical Library and retired in 2004. My successor, Mary Schultz, is at the "leading edge" of moving the library forward.

NOTE: Also see: Nevada Medical Archives, Fall 1990.



## Nevada's First Pediatrician: Dr. Anthony Huffaker

Dr. Anthony A. Huffaker was born in 1863 and graduated in 1890 from Cooper Medical School in San Francisco (later Stanford University School of Medicine). Huffaker practiced at Stewart Indian School and Carson City in 1896. (The school existed 1890-1980) He is said to have been the first pediatrician in Nevada. In 1906-7, Dr. Huffaker was president of the Nevada State Medical Association.

Dr. Huffaker decided in the early part of the 1900s to buy an automobile to use on his daily visits to patients. He bought the car, studied his book of instructions, and boldly took it out on his rounds. Several hours later Mrs. Huffaker was in the front yard watering Dr. Huffaker's prize dahlias when the doctor came driving down the street. He called out to her but drove on past; in a few minutes he came back

around the block, and with an agonized look on his face, he drove past again; the third time around he leaned out and called to his wife, "Get the instruction book and throw it to me the next time around. I've forgotten how to stop this blamed machine!"

Dr. Huffaker practiced in Reno during his later years and owned a ranch in South Reno—the present site of Huffaker Hills, Huffaker Park, and Huffaker Elementary School.

Note: It is impossible to verify that Dr. Huffaker was the first pediatrician. In fact, many 19th-century women physicians only treated children and women. They could be considered pediatricians.

## Dr. Anthony Huffaker's Journals

Reno Surgeon Dr. R. Thatcher Dilley came into possession of a priceless historical artifact from Ruth Thom of Carson City. The seven volumes of handwritten journals date from March 2, 1896, to August 9, 1907. They contain a wealth of patient records and treatment. Dr. Huffaker developed "shorthand" abbreviations making some entries difficult to decipher. Dr. Dilley donated the journals to the Great Basin History of Medicine Museum.

The entries include the patient's name, date treated, age of patient, and place of birth. Some family and past medical history is usually included. Many of the patients are easily recognized as Nevada pioneers. There are short descriptions of the patient's complaint, physical findings and treatment prescribed.

Volume VI skips a two-year period during the time that Dr. Huffaker did postgraduate studies in Germany. There is also a small volume (with only a few entries) concerning a gold mine, possibly one of his investments. These leather-bound books are remarkably well preserved, and as far as we can determine, are the only known physician's journals from that time period. They represent a priceless resource for any researcher studying the late 19th-century.

## Former Dean R.M. Daugherty's Donation

Office appointment records (1981 to 1995) given to Great Basin History of Medicine Museum.

## From Our Readers

- *Holiday greetings from Dr. William Stephan and Dr. Sam Parks.*
- *"I enjoy GW," Kevin Lasko, 1987 UNR Med grad.*

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