

THE WATERMARK



Newsletter of the Librarians, Archivists
& Museum Professionals in the History
of the Health Sciences

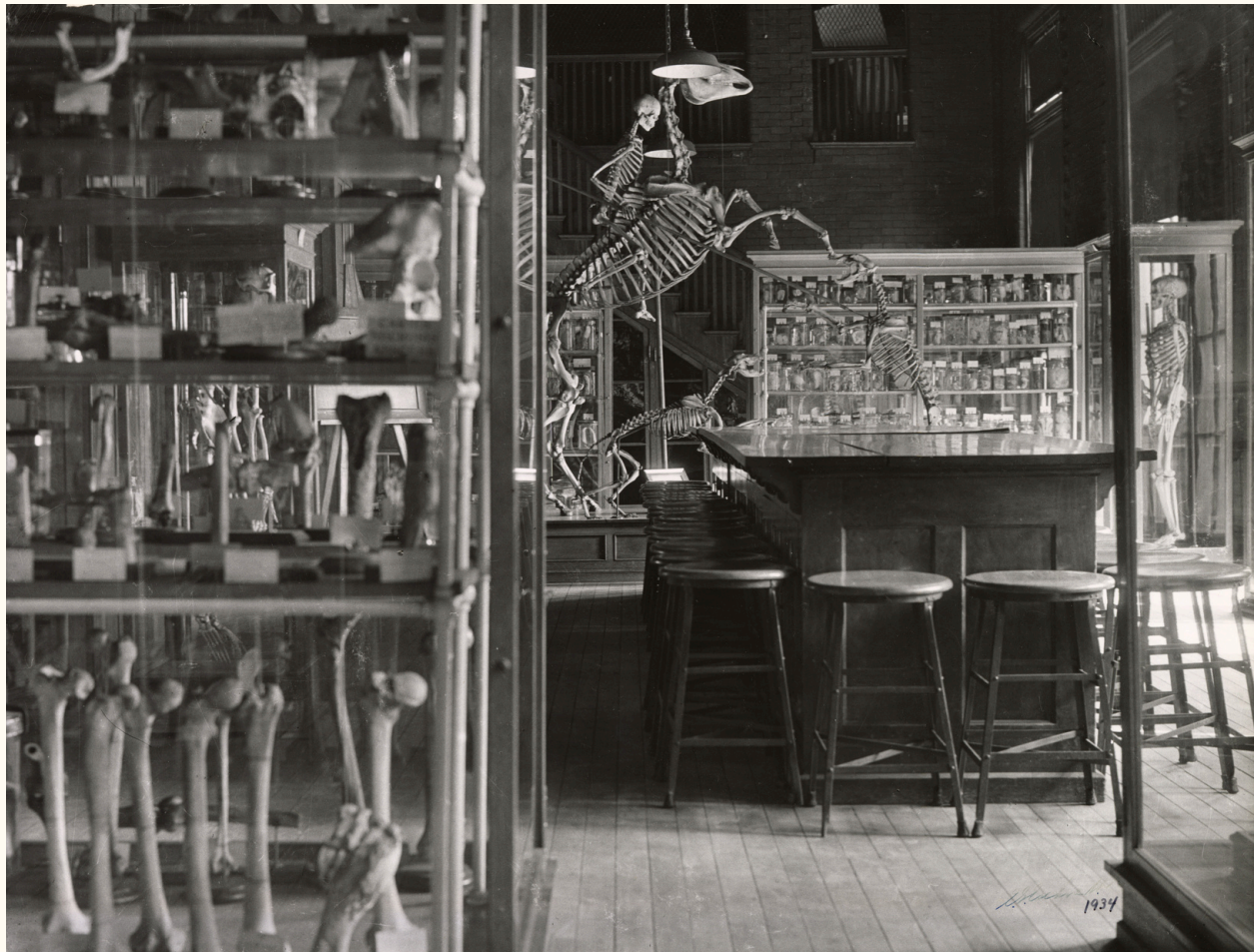


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Submissions For the Watermark

The Watermark encourages submissions of news and stories about events, collections, catalogues, people, awards, grants, publications, and anything else of professional interest to the members of LAMPHHS. Please submit your contributions in a timely way to the editors, as e-mail attachments. Visuals should be submitted separately as jpegs with a resolution of at least 300 dpi if possible. Copyright clearance for content and visuals are the responsibility of the author.

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Cover Image

Photograph of the University of Buffalo's Medical School Pathological Museum, 1934. Shared by Keith Mages, President of LAMPHHS and Curator, Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection, Abbott Library, University at Buffalo.

Editor's Message

Greetings LAMPHHS Members and Happy Spring!

The editorial staff hopes everyone is enjoying the Spring warm-up!

As we are now well into spring, we are quickly approaching the annual meeting, this year in Buffalo, NY, June 3-4, 2026. As is tradition, this issue of the *Watermark* includes the schedule for the meeting as well as information on local arrangements and tours. This year's meeting is free of charge thanks to the sponsorship of Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection and the University at Buffalo Special

Collections! Congrats to the Local Arrangements and Program Committee for planning what sounds like an engaging meeting!

Read on for news from our members at the Oskar Diethelm Library, Duke University Libraries, Arthur H. Aufses Jr. MD Archives, and the National Library of Medicine. As always, please consider submitting news from your institution as well as research articles in the coming issues of the *Watermark*.

Until next issue,

Bob Vietrogoski and Tara Wink



Image from: *Bloom Calendar (2021) Historical Collections, Health Sciences and Human Services Library, University of Maryland, Baltimore.*
Original: *Curtis's Botanical Magazine: Vol. 24, Plate 925, 1806*

From the President

Greetings!

Spring flowers and April showers are abundant here in Western New York – the seasons are changing and with it, June draws ever closer! I am looking forward to welcoming you to Buffalo on June 3 and 4 for our annual meeting. The program schedule is set, registration is open, and everything is falling into place. Whether attending in person, or virtually, our aim is to bring every attendee an impactful and inspiring event!

Of course, I need to thank the many committee members that have contributed their time and efforts, particularly those on the Local Arrangements Committee, Program Committee, Scholarship Award Committee, Recognition Award Committee, and the Publication Awards Committee. Thank you also to the Website team for helping to get our meeting registration open and functioning so smoothly!

I would also like to take a moment to thank the members of this year's Nominating Committee who've procured a phenomenal slate of candidates for the roles of Officer-at-Large, Secretary, President Elect.



Our Fearless Leader

Three cheers for both the committee and for those individuals who are stepping up to usher in the next phase of this organization!

As this will be my final message as President of LAMPHHS, one more note of appreciation – to each of you. It has been a distinct privilege and an honor to serve in this role; a chief reason being the persistent opportunity to connect, work, and learn with so many of you, as colleagues and as friends. For all of this, a sincere thank you!

And now, onward!

Keith C. Mages
LAMPHHS President



Harriman Hall on UB's South Campus will be the setting for the 2026 LAMPHHS meeting on June 4.

Local Arrangements Reminders & Updates for the 2026 LAMPHHS Meeting

Location

This year's LAMPHHS meeting will be held in Buffalo, New York from June 3-4, 2026. This will be the second Buffalo gathering in our organization's history, following a meeting held here in 1996.

Lodging

The meeting's hotel is the same as AAHM/AAHN's:

Hyatt Regency Buffalo
2 Fountain Plaza
Buffalo, NY 14202

The room rate is \$159 per night plus taxes. The cut-off date for reservations at this rate is May 6, 2026.

Hotel parking is currently priced at \$25.00 per night for self-parking and \$29.50 per night for valet parking.

You can book your room at the group rate online or by calling (716) 856-1234. When making inquiries, mention the "AAHN rate" to ensure you get the best deal.

Please keep in mind there is also a small block of rooms reserved for LAMPHHS/AAHM for June 2 as well. So, if you are looking to come to Buffalo early to be here for a full day of tours on Wednesday, feel free to book that Tuesday evening too (at the discounted rate).

Should this block of rooms sell out – there are several other hotels in the immediate vicinity of downtown Buffalo. Nearby alternative lodging options include:

- Hotel at the Lafayette:
 - 391 Washington Street, Buffalo, New York, 14203-2108
 - Phone: (716) 853-1505
- Hampton Inn & Suites Buffalo Downtown:
 - 220 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, New York 14202
 - Phone: (716) 855-2223
- Hilton Garden Inn Buffalo Downtown:
 - 10 Lafayette Square, Buffalo, New York 14203
 - (716) 848-1000
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites Buffalo Downtown:
 - 601 Main St, Buffalo, New York 14203
 - (716) 854-5500

Travel to Buffalo

Buffalo Niagara International Airport (BUF) serves the Western New York

Region. From the airport, NFTA-Metro public bus transportation (\$2.00), rental cars, or ride share services can take you to the meeting hotel.

Additionally, downtown Buffalo is served by Amtrak trains. If coming by train, be sure to disembark at the Buffalo Exchange Street Station (BFX). The conference hotel is about a 20-minute walk from this station. The NFTA-Metro light rail or ride sharing can also get you to the hotel very quickly. Please note when taking the train: there is also a suburban stop in the Buffalo region, Depew Station (BUF). This station is approximately 15 miles outside of the city and much further from the hotel.

For those driving to the region, valet parking is available at the hotel for \$29.50 per night (with in and out privileges). Additionally, numerous parking garages are nearby, including the Owen B. Augspurgen Ramp.

Getting Around Buffalo

Just outside of the Hyatt Regency is the Fountain Plaza station of the NFTA-Metro light rail system. To the west, the light rail will take you to Lake Erie and Canalside. To the east, it terminates at the University Station, the University at Buffalo's South Campus (this year's conference venue). As with the buses, the cost for the light rail is \$2.00. Tickets for both can be

purchased via phone, with the [Token Transit](#) app. Unfortunately, the light rail does not extend to many other places one might consider visiting while in the region. For this, NFTA-Metro buses or ride sharing options would be necessary. The [20 bus](#) travels up Elmwood Avenue, stopping near many sites of interest including the Elmwood Village area, the AKG Art Gallery, and the Buffalo History Museum.

Conference Venue

This year's meeting will be hosted at the University at Buffalo's Harriman Ballroom (105 Harriman Hall), on the [South Campus](#) (3435 Main Street, Buffalo, New York, 14214). This is the campus of UB's health sciences schools (excluding the medical school, which is closer to downtown) and is home to Abbott Library and the sponsor of this year's free meeting registration, the Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection.

This hybrid meeting will run from 8:45 am – 4:30 pm (EST) on June 4, with an optional reception at nearby Abbott Library and the Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection from 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm.

The meeting's program is available [online](#) or on pages 12-14 of this Watermark issue, and registration for the dinner, meeting, and tours is available on the [LAMPHHS website](#).

Bus transportation via UB Transportation will be available to transfer attendees from the conference hotel (Buffalo Hyatt Regency) to the meeting in Harriman Hall. The first bus will arrive at the Hyatt on June 4 at 7:45 am and leave for UB at 8:00 am. Buses will leave every 15 minutes, with the last bus leaving at 8:45 am.

Similarly, at the end of the day, UB buses will be available to transfer attendees back to the conference hotel. The first bus will arrive at 4:45 pm and will leave for the hotel at 5:00 pm. A second bus will arrive at 5:00 pm and leave at 5:15 pm. These will then loop between the two locations until 6:00 pm.

For those interested in other modes of transportation between the conference hotel and UB's South Campus, consider the [Buffalo Metro Rail](#) (light rail). The cost of a round-trip between the conference hotel stop (Fountain Plaza Station) and UB (University Station) is \$4.00. Parking on campus for non-affiliates is limited to the free park & ride lot (3435 Main St) NFTA-Metro University Station.

Wednesday Night Dinner

Our pre-conference dinner will be held from 6:00-9:00 pm on June 3 at 500 Pearl, in the 1914 Room. This historic event venue (500 Pearl Street, Buffalo New York) is located just a 7-minute walk from the conference hotel and promises to be a pleasant setting for good food & camaraderie. Register for the dinner online.

The venue is fully accessible via elevator and caters to a variety of dietary needs (note at registration if you keep a vegetarian, vegan, and/or gluten free diet).

Although the kitchen at 500 Pearl cannot accommodate Kosher or Halal diets, we will work with other area restaurants to provide meals that can. If you would like to join us for this occasion, please do! Simply note your preference for a Kosher or Halal meal.

Tours: June 3, 2026

Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park: Guided Tour of Ships and Grounds

Time: 11:00 am – 12:30 pm (90 minutes); June 3, 2026.

Cost: \$16.00 (per person)

Maximum Registrants: 15

Address: 1 Naval Park Cove, Buffalo, New York 14202.

Shane Stephenson, Director of Museum Collections, will lead this guided tour of Buffalo's Naval Park, the largest inland Naval Park in the United States. Located on Buffalo's Waterfront, this unique destination features four decommissioned Naval vessels that served in a variety of military conflicts in our nation's history.

Vessels include the USS Little Rock, the last surviving vessel from the Cleveland-class of light cruisers in the world; the USS The Sullivans, the first ship in the U.S. Navy to be named for more than one person, one of only four remaining examples from the Fletcher-class of destroyers in the world; the USS Croaker, a Gato-class submarine on the National Register of Historic Places; and the PTF-17, one of only 20 fast patrol boats from the Nasty-class to be built, used as a high-speed reconnaissance and patrol craft in Vietnam.



The partially sunken USS The Sullivans at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park, 2022.

As part of this tour, participants will get first-hand knowledge about the challenges of having the museum's collections stored on 80+ year old naval vessels. Register online.

Getting There: We will meet at 10:30 am in the lobby of the Hyatt Regency and walk to the Fountain Plaza light-rail stop at 10:35 am. The light-rail is free above ground, with the Naval Park located very close, about a 5-minute ride away at the Erie Canal Harbor stop.

Explore Buffalo Walking Tour: Downtown Icons & Hidden Treasures

Time: 1:00 – 2:30 pm (90 minutes);
June 3, 2026.
Cost: \$20.00 (per person)
Maximum Registrants: 20
Address: Begins at the Lobby of the Buffalo Hyatt Regency

Step into the grandeur of turn-of-the-century Buffalo on this downtown walking tour, where richly detailed facades and spectacular interiors reveal Buffalo's rise as one of America's great commercial centers. At the dawn of the 20th century—when Buffalo ranked among the nation's largest cities and welcomed visitors from around the world—prominent local firms such as Green & Wicks and Esenwein & Johnson shaped a downtown defined by elegance, ambition, and artistic craftsmanship.

Along the way, you'll experience dramatic architecture up close with visits inside historic spaces such as the Goldome Bank and Electric Tower, while the intricate details of lesser-known downtown gems will reward curious explorers. You'll see how thoughtful restoration has brought new life to historic buildings like the Curtiss Hotel. Together, the buildings on this tour create a vivid story of the enduring beauty of downtown Buffalo's historic buildings.

This tour is approximately ninety minutes in length and 1.2 miles of walking. Register online.

For those interested in also attending the tour of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library's Rare Book Room at 2:30 pm, fear not! This walking tour takes place in the same vicinity as the Public Library and we will be sure to direct those interested in attending the Library's Rare Book Room tour to that venue at the end of this tour.

Getting There: This tour will commence from the lobby of the conference hotel, the Buffalo Hyatt Regency, at 1:00 pm.

Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, Central Branch: Rare Book Room Tour

Time: 2:30 – 4:00 pm (90 minutes);
June 3, 2026.

Cost: Free

Maximum Registrants: 25

Address: 1 Lafayette Square,
Buffalo, New York 14203.

Led by Heather Gring, Rare Book Curator, this tour will highlight the titles and collections held by the Buffalo Central Library's Rare Book Room. Included among its holdings are items of local, national and international impact including Mark Twain's original manuscript of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Shakespeare's First Folio, the complete Audubon Birds of America elephant folio, the "Milestones of Science" Collection of 197 first editions of the world's most significant scientific discoveries, an anti-slavery collection, as well as many other manuscripts and archives. Register online.

Getting There: Located within walking distance (2 minutes) of the Buffalo Hyatt Regency. Those who would like to walk with the group can meet at 2:20 pm in the lobby of the Hyatt before we walk over at 2:25 pm.

For those also attending the Explore Buffalo walking tour, a member of the LAC will be present on the walking tour to help with wayfinding to the public library at the conclusion of that tour.

Optional Tour for June 3 (on your own): Lily Dale Assembly: Tour of Grounds, Library, and Museum

Address: 5 Melrose Park, PO Box 248, Lily Dale, New York 14752

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide group transportation to Lily Dale. For those interested in visiting the grounds on June 3, you may explore car rental options at the Hertz, Pearl Street location. This rental location is very close (walkable) to the conference hotel.

Lily Dale is a historic late 19th century spiritualist community located about an hour from downtown Buffalo, on the shores of Cassadaga Lakes in Chautauqua County, New York. It is a renowned home for mediums and spiritualist healers, and boasts a historic spiritualist library, museum, shops, and numerous gardens and walking trails. Although the summer season (when the most activity happens) does not begin until June 20, 2026, the Lily Dale Assembly office manager has noted they may be able to ensure access to the library, museum, etc. during a visit on June 3! Additionally, as many mediums reside in the village throughout the year, registrants who are interested in scheduling a reading during our time in Lily Dale are welcome to explore available mediums on the assembly's website.

Getting There: If interested in possibly visiting, send an email to Keith Mages (kcmages@buffalo.edu) for more information.

Tours: June 4, 2026**Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection and Abbott Library: Reception and Tours**

Time: 4:30 – 6:00 pm (90 minutes);
June 4, 2026.

Cost: Free

Maximum Registrants: No max.

Address: Abbott Hall, 3435 Main
Street, Buffalo, New York 14214

Just a few steps from our meeting venue, Harriman Hall, stands Abbott Hall, home to UB's [Abbott Library](#) and the [Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection](#). After the meeting, all are welcome to head over to Abbott Library for a cocktail reception and light refreshments. Tours of the building, including the

History of Medicine Collection and the [Polish Room](#) will also be available at this time.

Getting There: The History of Medicine Collection and Abbott Library are located just adjacent to the meeting venue, Harriman Hall. Members of LAC and UB staff will be on hand to help guide members to the Library, at the conclusion of the meeting.

UB buses will be available to transport members back to the Hyatt Regency Buffalo. The first bus will arrive at 4:45 pm and will leave for the hotel at 5:00 pm. A second bus will arrive at 5:00 pm and leave at 5:15 pm. These will then loop between the two locations until 6:00 pm.



Abbott Library's Main Reading Room.

LAMPHHS Meeting Schedule

Date: June 4, 2026

Location: Harriman Ballroom, UB's South Campus

8:30 am - 8:45 am EST / 5:30 am - 5:45 am PST Registration

8:45 am - 9:30 am EST / 5:45 am - 6:30 am PST Business Meeting & Breakfast

9:30 am - 10:30 am EST / 6:30 am - 7:30 am PST Keynote

Elizabeth Garner Masarik (Assistant Professor, Department of History, SUNY-Brockport) and Sarah Handley-Cousins (Associate Teaching Professor, Department of History, University at Buffalo)

"A Place to Be Made Whole: Spiritualism, Reinvention, and the Radical Roots of Alternative Medicine"

Long before "wellness" became an industry, Americans were traveling to places like Lily Dale, New York to find what conventional medicine and mainstream religion could not give them. This keynote traces a history of alternative healing through the story of the world's largest Spiritualist community, a place where feminist radicals, utopian dreamers, skeptics, and seekers have converged since 1879. From Victorian Spiritualist healing circles to the temple that still operates today, from suffragist reformers to a Mohawk singer who reinvented himself on Lily Dale's grounds, this talk illuminates why the impulse toward alternative healing is not a modern trend but a persistent, politically charged strand of American life.

10:30 am - 10:45 am EST / 7:30 am - 7:45 am PST Break

10:45 am - 12:00 pm EST / 7:45 am - 9:00 am PST Session 1

Psychics and Spiritual Healing

Keith Mages, Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection, Abbott Library, University at Buffalo

"Verily, Truth is Stranger than Fiction": Nurses as Mediums, Witnesses, and Apparitions in 19th and Early 20th Century Psychological Research

Rachel Ingold, Rubenstein Library, Duke University

Magic, Religion & Science: Parapsychology at Duke

Nicole Topich and Nick Brenner, Oskar Diethelm Library, Weill Cornell Medicine
Psychics and Psychiatry

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EST / 9:00 am - 10:00 am PST Lunch

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EST / 10:00 am - 11:00 am PST Session 2

Plants and Herbs in Healing

Mollie Frazier, East Carolina University

Rooted in the Records: Community-Based Healing Across Oral History, Practice, and Print in Laupus Library's History Collections (virtual)

Teri Hedgpeth, Boston Children's Hospital

French Lilac to Metformin: Historical Review of Pharmaceutical Applications of Alternative Medicines

Christopher Ryland and James Thweatt, Vanderbilt University

John the Conqueror, Moles' Feet, and Keeping the Blues Away: The William Groce Harrison Folk Medicine Collection at Vanderbilt University

2:00 pm - 2:15 pm EST / 11:00 am - 11:15 am PST Break

2:15 pm - 3:15 pm EST / 11:15 am - 12:15 pm PST Session 3

Marking the Boundaries of Medicine in Healing

Steve Hussman, University of Arizona Libraries, Special Collections

Curandismo: Documenting the Folk Medicine of Healing (virtual)

Erin Chiparo and Sarah McElroy Mitchell, Indiana University

'Do Not Give Us a Bitter Death': Examples of Apotropaic Print in the Lilly Library's Collection

Heather Stecklein, Mayo Clinic, and Nathalie Wheaton, Rush University Medical Center

From Trying Sincerely to Lying Severely: Early Forays into Uncertain Treatments

3:15 pm - 3:30 pm EST / 12:15 pm - 12:30 pm PST Break

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm EST / 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm PST Session 4

Strategies for Archival Outreach

Jason Byrd, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Aligning Motivation and Mission: Revitalizing Legacy Donor Engagement in Health Sciences Historical Collections

Angela He and Elisabeth Brander, Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University in St. Louis

Reading the Cards: Outreach Through the Becker Rare Books Tarot Project

4:30 pm EST / 1:30 pm PST End of Official Programing

4:30 pm - 6:00 pm EST Reception and Tours, Robert H. Brown History of Medicine Collection, Abbott Library, and UB's South Campus.



A view of Abbott Library, on the South Campus of the University at Buffalo.

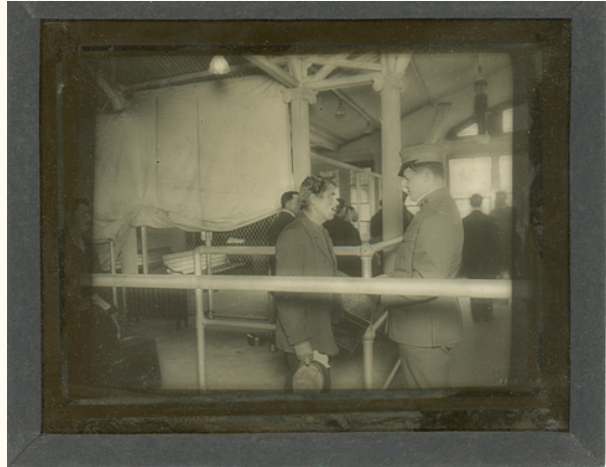
Repository News

The Oskar Diethelm Library: New Exhibit Announcement

The Oskar Diethelm Library is proud to announce its new exhibit, "*Mental Hygiene*" and *Immigration: The Thomas W. Salmon MD Papers!* The exhibit focuses on the career of Thomas W. Salmon, an early 20th-century psychiatrist and leading figure in the "mental hygiene" movement.

Thomas W. Salmon earned his spurs as an immigration inspector on Ellis Island, where he was responsible for certifying whether immigrants arriving to the United States were "liable to become a public charge" by exhibiting signs of mental illness. He translated his experience with immigration into a career in hospital reform as the Medical Director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. In this capacity, he carried out surveys of psychiatric care facilities across the country and lobbied philanthropists for funds to modernize them. During WWI, he helped devise the US Army's first psychiatric care facilities on the Western Front in France. After the war, he became a professor at Columbia University, expanding the Psychiatry Department and playing an instrumental role in building the New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center on 168th and Broadway.

The exhibit focuses on themes of



National Committee for Mental Hygiene, "Immigrant Examiner Questioning an Immigrant", 1902-1913, lantern slide, National Committee for Mental Hygiene Collection, Box 29, Oskar Diethelm Library, https://empireadc.org/search/catalog/nnod_4919.

professionalization, immigration exclusion, and philanthropy, exploring how Salmon used immigration to gain access to Progressive Era reform and fundraising networks. The exhibit also explores how his career reflected the growing influence of psychiatry within both medicine and society, as Salmon navigated between private practice, government service, professional organizations, and educational institutions.

The exhibit draws on the newly digitized papers of the Diethelm's Thomas W. Salmon Collection, which were made possible through a Metropolitan Library Council of New York Digitization Grant. The exhibit can be found on the [Diethelm's website](#), and Salmon's papers can be accessed through a [Digital Culture of Metropolitan New York repository](#).

Gift to Name History of Medicine Collections at Duke Honors Legacy of Dr. Josiah Charles Trent



Dr. Josiah Charles Trent

The Duke University Libraries have received a \$3 million gift from Duke Trustee Emerita Rebecca Trent Kirkland (Class of 1964, MD 1968) along with her three sisters to name the History of Medicine Collections in the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library in honor of their father, Dr. Josiah Charles Trent (Class of 1934) (1914–1948). The gift recognizes Dr. Trent’s extraordinary legacy as Duke’s first division chief of thoracic surgery, a distinguished historian of medicine, and a visionary collector whose passion helped establish one of the nation’s most important medical history collections.

Dr. Kirkland and her sisters—Mary Duke Trent Jones (Class of 1963), Sarah “Sally” Elizabeth Trent Harris (Class of 1963), and Barbara Biddle Trent Kimbrell—are the children of Dr. Trent and Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans (1920–2012). A renowned philanthropist, civic leader, and member of Duke’s founding family, Mary Semans donated her late husband’s medical library to Duke University in 1956. That gift laid the foundation for what would become the History of Medicine Collections in the Rubenstein Library, now internationally recognized for their depth and interdisciplinary scope.

Like their parents, all four Trent sisters were raised with a deep appreciation for scholarship, service, and the arts. Also like them, they grew to have varied and longstanding ties across the university.

Dr. Kirkland’s service to Duke has included membership on the Duke University Board of Trustees (1995–2007) and the Duke University Health System Board of Directors (2002–2013). In recognition of her contributions, she received the Distinguished Service Award from the Duke Medical Alumni Association in 1992 and the Duke University Medal for Distinguished and Meritorious Service in 2012, the university’s highest honor.

“The Josiah Charles Trent History of Medicine Collection gifted to Duke in 1956 was a decades long project of

our parents, Joe and Mary Trent,” Kirkland said. “They wanted to make their collection accessible to benefit students of history, science, and medicine. Naming Duke’s growing History of Medicine Collections for our father emphasizes that the preservation and the study of history are critical for our future. It is timely to remember George Santayana’s words which were embossed on a plaque over the fireplace in our home library: ‘Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it’ (*The Life of Reason*, 1905).”

With this new gift—a portion of which is a charitable bequest—the History of Medicine Collections in the Rubenstein Library will permanently bear Dr. Josiah Charles Trent’s name, honoring both his scholarly vision and the enduring commitment of his family to Duke.

“Josiah Charles Trent’s life was all too brief, but his intellectual curiosity and love of learning were boundless,” said Joseph A. Salem Jr., Rita DiGiallorardo Holloway University Librarian and Vice Provost for Library Affairs. “It is deeply meaningful that the collections he and his wife built with such care—and that they so lovingly entrusted to Duke—will continue to educate and inspire future generations in his name. We are profoundly grateful to the Trent sisters for this extraordinary and transformative gift in their father’s honor.”

Born and raised in Oklahoma, Josiah Charles Trent came to Duke as an undergraduate, where he studied English, history, and premedical subjects. He received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1938, the same year he married Mary Duke Biddle. After completing internship training at Henry Ford Hospital in Michigan and serving as an instructor in surgery at the University of Michigan Hospital, Trent returned to Duke, where he completed his residency and, in 1946, was appointed associate professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Thoracic Surgery.

Despite a demanding clinical career and a prolonged battle with cancer, Dr. Trent remained deeply engaged in academic, cultural, and humanitarian pursuits. He authored more than 40 clinical and historical articles and was active in bibliographic and scholarly societies. He also served on the board of Lincoln Hospital in Durham, reflecting a strong commitment to community health and public service.

Alongside his medical work, Dr. Trent was an avid and discerning book collector. Working closely with his wife, he assembled a remarkable library that reflected the interdisciplinary nature of medical history and its connections to science, art, literature, and society. After his untimely death from lymphoma at age 34, Mary Duke

Biddle Trent Semans ensured that his vision would endure. “Despite the cloud of illness which hung over him for years, my husband never ceased to be enthusiastic about his library,” she wrote in 1956. “Considering what he amassed and collected during one short decade, I felt a total obligation and the desire to do my absolute best for the future of those books.”

Today, the Rubenstein Library’s History of Medicine Collections comprise more than 20,000 rare and unique medical books and 4,000 manuscripts, along with photographs, prints, ephemera, medical instruments, and artifacts dating from the twelfth through the twenty-first centuries. Collection strengths include surgery, anatomy, human sexuality, pediatrics, psychiatry, materia medica, and cardiology. Together, these materials bring historical perspectives to contemporary health issues and support interdisciplinary teaching and research at Duke and around the world.

Virtually every milestone work in medical history is represented in Dr. Trent’s collection, among them first editions of Andreas Vesalius’s *De humani corporis fabrica* (1543) and William Harvey’s *De motu cordis* (1628); manuscripts by Benjamin Rush, an eighteenth-century physician and signer of the Declaration of Independence; the largest collection of ivory anatomical manikins in North America; and the only known copy of *The Four Seasons*, a set of



An ivory anatomical manikin, showing a pregnant woman and fetus.

seventeenth-century engravings with movable flaps illustrating human anatomy and the stages of life. Yet it was William Beaumont’s *Experiments and Observations on the Gastric Juice and the Physiology of Digestion* (1833)—a Christmas gift Dr. Trent received as a young intern—that sparked his collecting efforts. “The book appeared innocuous enough,” he later wrote, “but actually carried the deadly virus of bibliomania.”

That mania for book collecting extended beyond medicine. Dr. and Mrs. Trent also collected literary works and manuscripts, most

notably those of American poet Walt Whitman. In 1943, they donated their Whitman collection to Duke, including four first editions of *Leaves of Grass* (1855), along with extensive manuscripts and correspondence. Given in honor of their four daughters, that early gift helped establish Duke as home to one of the world's most significant Walt Whitman collections.

Visitors can experience the richness of Duke's medical history holdings in the Josiah Charles Trent History of Medicine Room, part of the Mary Duke Biddle exhibit suite in the Rubenstein Library. Open seven days a week, the space features rotating exhibitions on topics related to the history of medicine, reflecting the generosity, intellectual curiosity, and collecting interests of Dr. Trent, Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, and their family.

"This incredible gift allows us to continue to grow and strengthen our collections, outreach, programming, and much more," said Rachel Ingold, Curator of the History of Medicine Collections. With this new gift, the Duke University Libraries reaffirm their commitment to preserving and expanding these collections for future generations. The naming of the Josiah Charles Trent History of Medicine Collections ensures that Dr. Trent's legacy—as physician, scholar, collector, and Duke alumnus—will remain central to Duke's mission of

advancing knowledge and understanding the human experience of health and disease.

News from the Arthur H. Aufses, Jr. MD Archives

The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai's Arthur H. Aufses, Jr. MD Archives is pleased to share the newly completed finding aid for the St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center collection, which spans the years 1977 and 2016.

One highlight of the collection is *For the Common Good: The St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center Story*, a film created to celebrate the history of both hospitals and their merger. Other videos capture coronary microsurgery practiced by George E. Green, MD, a pioneer in that field, as well as a 1980 lecture on Roentgen and Radiology. The Publications series includes magazines and newsletters describing activities that flesh out the hospitals primary missions of health care and research, while also shedding light on behind-the-scenes voluntary activities of the staff, such as charity runs and community engagement fairs and services. The Department of Religious Services records are particularly voluminous.

The Arthur H. Aufses, Jr. MD Archives would also like to announce the retirement of archivist Michala Biondi after thirty-six years in the field, the last ten of which

have been at Mount Sinai. Ms. Biondi completed her Masters of Arts in Archives Management at New York University and has served at such notable City institutions as the New York Public Library, the Metropolitan Museum of Art/The Cloisters, Radio City Music Hall, Chase Bank, Citibank, Columbia University's Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary and its law library, and the Jewish Theological Seminary library. Ms. Biondi looks forward to sleeping late, digging into family genealogy, continuing classical guitar lessons, and getting involved in local volunteer efforts in her Inwood neighborhood.

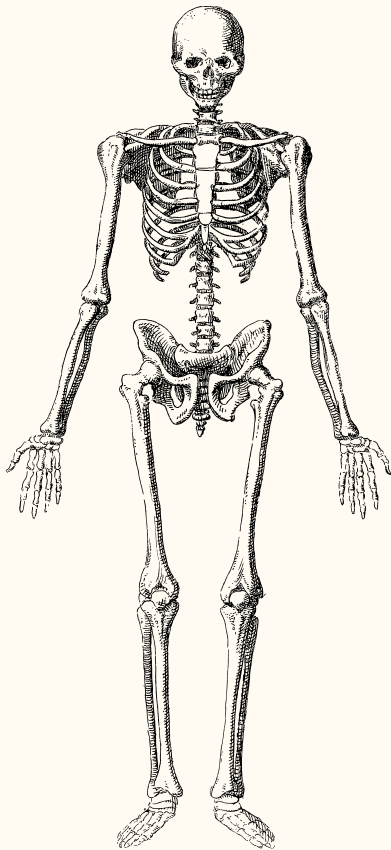


Illustration of a Skeleton by Pixabay

News from the National Library of Medicine



Expanding NLM Digital Collections

The National Library of Medicine continues to make available freely large portions of its collection via [NLM Digital Collections](#). Since the beginning of the year, staff have added nearly 600 items spanning more than five centuries and reflecting a variety of perspectives and experiences in the history of medicine and science. These materials include rare and unique works in the areas of global health and hygiene, comparative anatomy and physiology, pharmacology and chemistry, and classics of medicine and physiology. Over the next year, and into the future, NLM will digitize more of its collection to make it a part of the 21st research ecosystem.

Advancing Research through the NLM DeBakey Fellowship

Each year the [NLM Michael E. DeBakey Fellowship in the History of Medicine](#) enables selected fellows to study a variety of materials in the NLM collection to advance their research. Since 2017, the program

has supported 48 individuals in various career stages at 43 institutions, and it has facilitated the publication of five scholarly books and dozens of peer-reviewed articles. Following another record number of applications, reflecting growing awareness of this program, four new fellows are beginning their research:

Nicole Archambeau, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of History
Colorado State University
Research Project: Agriculture as Medicine in an Age of Exploration

Sofia Grant, BA
Doctoral Student, Department of the History of Medicine
Johns Hopkins University
Research Project: Diagnosing Uncertainty: Non-Specificity, Uncertain Knowledge, and the Management of Autoimmune Diseases Between the Laboratory and the Clinic

Richard Hirsh, PhD
Professor, Department of History
Virginia Tech
Research Project: Knowledge, Innovation, and Uncertainty in the Evolution of Modern Resuscitation Techniques

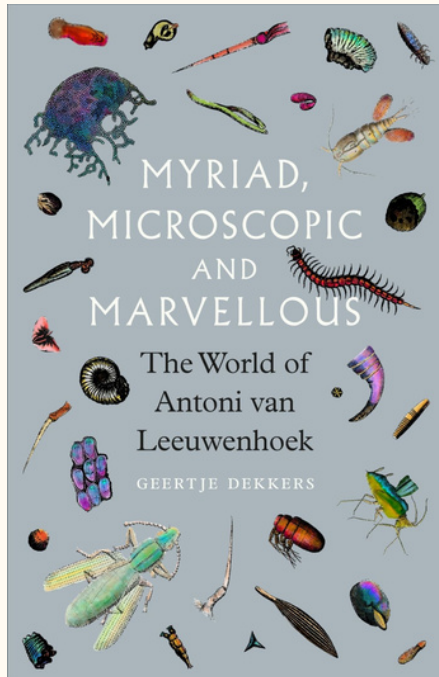
Barret Michalec, PhD
Associate Professor, Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation
Arizona State University

Each fellow will contribute a post about their research to NLM's blog *Circulating Now*, which regularly highlights user engagement with our collection. Their posts will become part of a [tagged collection](#) of more than three dozen posts authored by NLM DeBakey Fellows, which has been viewed nearly 80,000 times.

Become a guest author on *Circulating Now*

Are you undertaking and/or have you completed historical research in NLM's collections? Would you like to share it freely with a wide audience? Featured in the [Washington Post](#), *Circulating Now* circulates widely to its subscriber base of nearly 6,000 individuals, so your contribution will be widely read and appreciated! If you would like to write about your research in our collections, please send an email proposing your topic to Beth Mullen, managing editor, at elizabeth.mullen@nih.gov. If you do not already subscribe to *Circulating Now*, please do—just look for the “Follow us via email” box on the right-side of the [homepage](#).

Book Review



Geertje Dekkers, *Myriad, Microscopic and Marvellous: The World of Antoni van Leeuwenhoek*, translated by Andy Brown. London: Reaktion, 2025. 238 pages. \$30.00. ISBN: 9781836390978 (cloth).

Written to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Leeuwenhoek's death, the original Dutch version, *Veel, Klein en Curieus: De Wereld van Antoni van Leeuwenhoek, 1632-1723* (Amsterdam: Spectrum, 2023), was very favorably reviewed in the Netherlands when it appeared. Reviewers praised both the author's skill as a scholarly historian and her attractive style of writing. One reviewer pointed out that most previous biographers of Leeuwenhoek have been biologists, not trained historians. This makes a great difference. The perspective of a historian lends itself to biography

better than that of a scientist. Yes, data is to be assembled, but also, and primarily, a story is to be told.

Dekkers pursues several concurrent part-time careers, among which are curator at the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, freelance historian and journalist, and lecturer at the University of Utrecht. These diverse yet well-integrated credentials provide excellent preparation for writing a biography. Some biographers do proper research but do not write clearly. Others write clearly but do not do proper research. Dekkers achieves high marks in both. She writes clearly (at least in translation) and her documentation is thorough, precise, and pertinent. She does not jump to tempting conclusions but lets the evidence rule her interpretation of her subject.

Dekkers begins by sketching the early seventeenth-century conditions of science, medicine, culture, economics, and politics in the Netherlands. This may be old hat for many of us, but since it is necessary context to understand Leeuwenhoek's life, she does well to remind us and we do well to keep it in mind.

Leeuwenhoek did not invent the microscope. Magnifying lenses have existed since antiquity. The scientific use of lenses for observing phenomena was already established before he was born (41-48). His fame derives from the consensus that he, Robert Hooke (1635-1703),

and Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680) founded modern microbiology. Hooke and Kircher were professional scientists, but for Leeuwenhoek, science in general and microscopy in particular were never more than hobbies. Already successful in business and local government, he did not start using or making microscopes until his mid-thirties, shortly after becoming familiar with Hooke's *Micrographia* (1665). His single-lens microscopes were the best of his time, mainly because of his skill in grinding, blowing, or otherwise forming his own high-magnification convex lenses (126-129). He also devised many basic techniques that are still used in microscopy, such as staining specimens to make their properties easier to see (138). Among his earliest specimens, around 1668, were chalk from the cliffs near Chatham, Kent, and an ant (53-54).

Leeuwenhoek's reputation as a microscopist began on April 28, 1673, when his friend, the prominent physician and anatomist Regnier de Graaf, sent a letter to Henry Oldenberg, Secretary of the Royal Society, detailing a few of Leeuwenhoek's observations. Oldenberg was impressed (55). A condensed translation of this letter appeared in the May 19, 1673 issue of the Society's *Philosophical Transactions* on pages 6037-6038. The reaction of the English-speaking scientific community was immediate and positive. Despite his lack of higher education and his inability to speak any language

except Dutch, Leeuwenhoek was made a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1680 (33-34, 56). Leeuwenhoek was not quite a thoroughgoing empiricist. His observations were as detailed and as accurate as any in his day, but his interpretations were nearly always wrong (80-81). His bias in favor of Cartesian particle theory was a Procrustean bed into which he shoved his carefully gathered data (60-69). He also carried some anthropocentric prejudices into his work, even to the point of refusing to believe the evidence of his own eyes that the blood of a salmon could resemble that of a human (76).

Leeuwenhoek discovered spermatozoa, protozoa, and probably also bacteria, albeit in clustered colonies which he mistook for protozoa (105). Yet, as a child of his time at the dawn of the relentless scientific age, he could not have understood the significance of these discoveries (107). In some cases, he passed off what he saw as merely interesting, but in other cases he either made wild conjectures or augmented the wild conjectures of other observers. Prime examples of such speculation are his surmises about how human and animal babies come into being (173-175). He correctly discerned that spermatozoa emerge from testicles but failed to grasp the function of "female testicles," i.e., ovaries, or their follicles (112-116). He believed that females contribute nothing to reproduction except nutrition. He accepted the

"homunculus" theory that the male plants the seed of a preformed little human into the uterus, the only place where it can grow and develop. This theory was widely held, was depicted uncritically in Goethe's *Faust, Part Two*, and was not disproved until after Karl Ernst von Baer (1792-1876) discovered the ovum in 1827. But despite these errors, Leeuwenhoek made significant progress in disproving the ancient theory of spontaneous generation (149-153, 175-176).

To bolster his credibility, Leeuwenhoek would invite pastors, nobles, physicians, lawyers, and even ordinary people to look into his microscopes, describe what they saw, and serve as his witnesses, because, according to the Royal Society, "a single observation was no observation" (158-159). Such sharing enhanced his reputation. Yet the Royal Society maintained some skepticism until Hooke himself verified Leeuwenhoek's findings. Thereafter, even royals were eager to visit Leeuwenhoek to see what he saw (159-161).

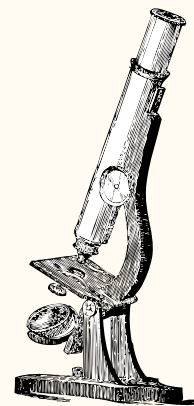
My knowledge of Dutch is minimal, so I cannot judge the quality of Brown's translation comparatively. However, his English is flawed by several infelicitous or overly colloquial expressions which any native anglophone writer ought to know to avoid, e.g., misusing the phrase "beg the question" (77, 108) to mean either "prompt the question" or "ask the question."

Dekkers ("... en het is de vraag waarom ...") does not make this error.

This book carries an implicit object lesson for museum curators, archivists, and rare book librarians: Grab the stuff as soon as it becomes available! We have lost almost all of Leeuwenhoek's hundreds of microscopes because they were auctioned into private hands 24 years after his death. Only 10 or 11 survive (7-10). Therefore, we professionals whose duty is to preserve historical artifacts and primary materials must identify them while their owners are still alive and persuade these owners to donate or bequeath these treasures to repositories instead of allowing them to be dissipated via estate auctions or the probate system.

Eric v.d. Luft

Owner, Gegensatz Press, North Syracuse, New York
and
Curator of Historical Collections Emeritus, Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, New York



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