

# medicine

at M I C H I G A N

Fall 2000

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

*history*

*celebrate  
150 years*



# How It Was Then

## Alumni Remember Their Days at the U-M Medical School

*At the beginning of the Medical School's Sesquicentennial Celebration, alumni/ae were invited by fellow alumnus Robert H. Bartlett (M.D. 1963, Residency 1969), chair of the Sesquicentennial Celebration Committee and member of the surgery faculty since 1980, to share their memories with readers of Medicine at Michigan. The excerpts included here highlight the variety and intensity of the memories of graduates of the Medical School going back to the Class of 1934.*

remembrances

"The question was:  
What happened in 1623?"



*Joseph J. Weiss (M.D. 1961)  
Huntington Woods*

In our first physiology lecture, Dr. Horace Davenport grabbed our attention by announcing that the first person to answer his question correctly would receive an "A" in physiology and be exempt from any examinations or attendance. The question was: What happened in 1623?

After a long pause, the amphitheater echoed with answers: the discovery of America, landing of the Pilgrim fathers, the death of Leonardo Da Vinci. Then Nancy Zuzow called out: "The publication of William Harvey's 'The Heart and Its Circulation.'" There was sudden silence. She must be right. How clever of her. Of course a physiologist would see this landmark publica-

tion as the event to which we should give homage. Who would have thought that Nancy was so smart? Even Dr. Davenport was impressed. He asked her to stand, and acknowledged that she had provided the first intelligent response. "However," he noted, "that publication occurred in 1628."

No one could follow up Nancy's response. Dr. Davenport looked around the room, sensed our ignorance, realized we had nothing more to offer, and then said, "1623 was the publication of William Shakespeare's First Folio." He announced that we would now move on and "return to our roles as attendants at the gas station of life," and began his first in a series of three lectures on the ABC of Acid-Base Chemistry.

# alumni

“ Counting corn kernels...  
stimulated my interest in...  
genetics.”

*Harold F. Falls (M.D. 1936, Residency 1939)  
Brighton*

Summer time odd jobs and much sacrifice on the part of my parents enabled me to enroll in medical school in September 1932. During my senior college year I had taken an elective course, “Corn hybridization and genetics,” a laboratory experience directed by D. Shull, Ph.D. Dr. Shull was noted worldwide for his work in corn hybridization. I am certain counting corn kernels of different size, shape and color and *Drosophila* fly mutations further stimulated my interest in individual differences and genetics.

“ She would tell us the  
questions she would ask...  
and the answers she would  
expect.”



*Michael M. Okihiro (M.D. 1955)  
Kaneohe, Hawaii*

Ask anyone in the class of '55 of the U-M Medical School who the best teacher was, and you'll get the same answer: Dr. Elizabeth Crosby. And you'll probably get the same answer from all the students who went through Michigan during the many years that Dr. Crosby taught neuroanatomy there in the 50s, 60s and 70s. She was a gifted, dedicated anatomist, investigator and researcher, but her forte was teaching the countless thousands of medical students and neuroscientists who went through her department.

Her formula for teaching was very simple and went something like this. Tell the students what they should learn. Review with them what they should know. Tell them what the examination questions will be, and tell them what the answers should be, because that's what they need to retain.

Dr. Crosby was about 50 years old when we had her. She was a small lady, couldn't have weighed more than a hundred pounds, but she always had a sparkle in her eyes and had a knack of making neuroanatomy come alive in her lectures. She always had a review session the evening before the big mid-terms and again before final exams. Coming to the review sessions, she emphasized, was strictly voluntary, but no one ever missed them. At least not any sane medical students. In these sessions she would go over the neuroanatomy she wanted us to remember. She would tell us the questions which she would ask in the examination the following day and the answers she would expect..

From time to time I think of her and how she tried to teach me where the pain fibers ran through the spino-thalamic tract and into the lateral lemniscus, and the fascinating visual pathways which run from the eyes through the optic tracts, the quadrigeminal plates and to the very back of the brain. She was the one who sorted out the intricacies of the autonomic nervous system and made it easy enough for me to remember the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous paths. And a lot more.

Since I eventually became a neurologist I have to give her a large part of the credit for turning my head in that direction. The notes which I took in her classes more than 50 years ago haven't been looked at for a while but I still have them bound and protected on my bookshelf.

“ I received a D...  
I was also sent to  
the Psychiatry  
Department for a  
series of tests..”

*Harry J. Schmidt (M.D. 1948,  
Residency 1957)  
East Lansing*

I had one experience I have never told anyone, at the dean's request, but now after 50 years make it yours, as it probably represents a bygone era of management.

As entering freshmen we were told “Look to your right and to your left; one of you three will not be here to graduate.” With that “definition” we proceeded in fear and maximum attention to our studies. In the second year I chose as an elective a course in applied anatomy and ➤





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**" I...became the fourth generation to graduate from the Medical School!"**

felt I had worked hard and written a good final exam. To my surprise I received a D grade which placed me on probation and I was asked to see the professor, Dr. McCotter (who we all loved and admired for his skill and helpfulness and interest in us). I was also sent to the Psychiatry Department for a series of tests and interviews. When I came to Dr. McCotter's office he took my bluebook exam from the pile and asked me to look it over. His phone rang and he was involved on it for some time. Meanwhile I went through the bluebook —10 questions each graded 4-9-10 etc. through the book totaling an 86 (a good paper). I noted on the front of the book a total of 67 and noted two pages in the book somewhat stuck together where 19 points were probably missed in the addition. When Dr. McCotter finished his phone call I pointed out the mistake and he took the bluebook, paged it over, took a new red pencil, changed the grading and stated, "Whoever graded this paper was wrong. Your grade of D stands and I want you to come in two to three hours a week this next semester for make-up study and a reexamination then."

Feeling this grossly unfair, I went to Dean Furstenberg. He heard the story, thought for a while and said, "Mr. Schmidt, here at Michigan each professor completely controls what goes on in his department. I suggest you discuss this with no one and do exactly what Dr. McCotter says!"

I studied anatomy hard, fearing my future in medicine was indeed on the line. I passed the next exam. My D stood on the permanent record and my neglect of my other courses that term produced lower grades, resulting in a lower class standing.

There was a good side. I later trained as a surgeon under Dr. Fred Coller at Michigan and put my considerable anatomical knowledge to good use over my years.

That's the way it was!

P.S. Catharsis is therapeutic and feels good.

P.P.S. The Psychiatry Department thought I was normal!

*Frances M. Friedman, M.D. (M.D. 1961, Residency 1967)  
Hanover, New Hampshire*

My father took me to Michigan for the first time in 1954. As we turned up State Street I remember him telling me about the long legacy of memories of his family who had graduated from the Medical School. Every time I see those bricks on State Street I am reminded of that trip up the street as he and my younger sister took me to school to start my freshman year as an undergraduate. I went on to follow in his family's footsteps and became the fourth generation to graduate from the Medical School. I graduated in 1961, my father preceded me in 1923 (Frank Moran). My great-uncle graduated in the 1880s (Francis Joseph Todd) and my great-great-grandfather (George Todd) graduated in the 1860s. I had hoped that one of my kids would become the fifth generation, but unfortunately they went to Dartmouth Medical School instead.

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**" They aren't the smartest people in the world but they'll make good doctors..!"**

*Frederick V. Hauser (M.D. 1944, Residency 1945)  
Pawlet, Vermont*



In 1943 our class was taken into the Armed Forces. Those who chose to be in the Army were housed in Victor Vaughan dormitory. The Army was very good to us but sometime in the fall we were ordered to have lights out in the dorm at 10 p.m. Shortly after the order was issued there was a knock on our door and at the door was Dean Furstenberg. I always remember how neat and trim and

nicely dressed he was. He said he had heard that we were ordered to turn the lights out at 10 p.m.

"Well," he said, "medical students need time to study. They used to be able to study at night. Medical students aren't the smartest people in the world, but they'll make good doctors. They'll make good doctors and they need time to study. They aren't the smartest people in the world but they'll make good doctors and they need time to study."

I remember that he repeated himself several times, just as he had repeated slide presentations in one of our classes.

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“...I contracted polio at eight months of age..”

*Max Karl Newman (M.D. 1934)  
Bloomfield Hills*

I was always interested in medicine, especially physical medicine. As an infant in New York City, I contracted polio at eight months of age (I have one weak leg), so I was constantly exposed to orthopods and pediatricians. I was part of the founding group for the specialty. When we organized the Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation on September 6, 1939, I was number 13 on the list. We had to have 100 doctors for the AMA to accept us as a specialty. We had 98, so I borrowed two neurologists to make it 100.

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“ This was my first contact with Dr. Weller, and I was deeply impressed with his kindness...”

*John W. McCallister (M.D. 1943)  
Sarasota, Florida*



In the summer of 1937-38, I removed a cancerous breast from a dog owned by a patient in the Monroe Hospital (in Monroe, Michigan), where, as an undergraduate, I worked summers and during school vacations. I had heard of Carl V. Weller, professor of pathology at the University of Michigan, and not blessed with enough

sense to know better, bottled the specimen and sent it to him for his opinion.

In a very short time, I had a complete report on the University Hospital report form, plus a full-page letter from Dr. Weller describing the pathology found, its clinical significance, and the possible clinical consequences. That was my first contact with Dr. Weller, and I was deeply impressed with his kindness to an unknown novice from Toledo, Ohio.

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“...I wish I could have had more appreciation at the time”

*Douglas W. Jenkins (M.D. 1967)  
San Antonio, Texas*



In looking back I am amazed at how little I appreciated the skill and fame of our various professors. I had a chance to see Charles Gardner Child operate on a pancreatic pseudocyst. I assisted (as much as a student can) in plastic surgery with Reed Dingman. I received amazing education in endocrinology by Dr. Conn and his associates. There were others of similar national and international status. Today, if I mention those names to appropriate specialists, there is instant recognition and respect for the training we received. But at the time I didn't understand just where Michigan stood among medical institutions. I certainly do now, and I wish I could have had more appreciation at the time.

For my best, last lecture, could I please have a group? If not, let me listen to Bob Green. He is the reason I entered pulmonary medicine. What a clear, concise manner, and what superb knowledge of his field. [m](#)

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“ The four of us scored second, third, fourth and seventh in the country”

*Donald S. Schuster (Residency 1958)  
Madison, Wisconsin*

In July 1956 I came to Ann Arbor to complete the final two years of my dermatology residency, joining J.B. Tisserand, Ken James and Walker Lea. Our teachers were Bill Taylor, Dick Harrell and our highly esteemed department head, Arthur C. Curtis.

The Michigan residency was greatly coveted, being at that time, and now also, one of the two best in the U.S. My two years in Ann Arbor were two of the best years of my life. We were all anticipating our dermatology board exams. Dr. Curtis felt that the prestige of the department would be reflected in how we did on the board exam. The four of us scored second, third, fourth and seventh in the country. We felt that we had made Dr. Curtis proud of us and had upheld the pride of our department.