



## *Medical History Society of New Jersey*

c/o UMDNJ—Special Collections  
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# NEWSLETTER

October 2003

Volume 23, Number 2

### SECOND FOUNDATION OF UMDNJ LECTURE

October 8, 2003

The fall meeting of the Medical History Society of New Jersey will be held Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at The Nassau Club in Princeton. MHSNJ member, **Karen Reeds, PhD**, will present the second Foundation of UMDNJ Lecture. The lecture is named to commemorate the Foundation's significant contribution to the Society's Education Fund. Dr. Reeds' lecture is entitled "Keeping Well in New Sweden: Diet, Disease, and Medicinal Plants." Dr. Reeds is an independent historian and museum consultant. She is the author of the book catalogue to the MHSNJ-sponsored exhibit of the same name, *A State of Health: New Jersey's Medical Heritage* (Rutgers University Press, 2001). MHSNJ President, Frederick C. Skvara, MD will display medical philately related to the program. Registration begins at 3:30 p.m.; the program begins at 4 p.m.

*MHSNJ Business Meeting*, Frederick Skvara, MD, President

*Hypogonadic Eunuchoid Giants in the Land of the Pharaohs and  
Diprosopus in Tlatilco: Medical Images from the Past*  
Wolfgang Jöchle, DVM

*"You've Got Mail!": The Nineteenth-Century Correspondence of  
Dr. Elijah Rosencrantz and his Son John*  
Michael Nevins, MD

*Clinics in Cuneiform: Medicine in Mesopotamia*  
Mary Coleman, MD

*Jersey Pills for Jersey Ills: The New Jersey Patent Medicine Show*  
William Helfand, ScD; Saffron Lecturer, 1994

Cocktails and Dinner (6-7:30 pm)

Second Foundation of UMDNJ Lecture

*Keeping Well in New Sweden: Diet, Disease, and Medicinal Plants*  
Karen Reeds, PhD, Independent Historian and Museum Consultant

Members, students, and friends are invited to attend the dinner meeting. Cost is \$40/ members, \$50/ guests; advance registration is required. For information, contact MHSNJ, c/o UMDNJ Special Collections, G.F. Smith Library, 30 Twelfth Avenue, PO Box 1709, Newark, NJ 07101-1709, (973) 972-7830, [densky@umdnj.edu](mailto:densky@umdnj.edu).

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### MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

**Francis P. Chinard, MD** is teaching a History of Medicine elective to first and second year students at the UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School.

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**Vincent J. Cirillo, PhD** reports that Rutgers University Press will publish his book, *Bullets and Bacilli: The Spanish-American War and Military Medicine*, in January 2004. This is the first book to focus on the medical history of this nineteenth-century military conflict.

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**Sandra Moss, MD** presented "The Other Yellow Fever Experiments" at the American Osler Society's meeting held last May in Edinburgh.

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**Michael Nevins, MD** will be giving a five-part lecture series about Jewish medical history at Bergen Community College in Paramus on Tuesday afternoons, September 16<sup>th</sup> through October 14<sup>th</sup>.

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**Karen Reeds, PhD** was awarded the David L. Cowen Award by the MHSNJ at the Society's May meeting. Dr. Reeds presented "*Keeping Well in New Sweden: Diet, Health, and Medicinal plants*" at the 2nd Annual New Sweden Conference: Man, Medicine, and Material Culture, sponsored last November by the American Swedish Historical Museum in Philadelphia. As exhibit curator and museum consultant to the New Jersey Veterans Museum, Dr. Reeds prepared an exhibit on Newark's Ward Hospital and Civil War medicine and is working on an exhibit on smallpox in the Revolutionary War. She is currently serving as museum consultant to the Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey, developing a museum at the site of the former New Jersey State Village for Epileptics in Skillman. Dr. Reeds is chairing the prize committee for the J. Worth Estes Award in History of Pharmacy for AAHM, and serving on the editorial advisory boards of the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* and *Isis Current Bibliography*.

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### What's New at UMDNJ Special Collections?

A number of new antiquarian acquisitions have been acquired through gift or purchase for the benefit of the University Libraries Special Collections.

Norman Rosenberg, MD, Emeritus Professor of Surgery (Vascular) at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, made a substantial gift of fifteen rare and out of print books. Three significant works are included in the donation:

Joan Alexander Brambilla's *Instrumentarium Chirurgicum Viennense* (Wien, 1781) is a folio that includes sixty-five beautifully engraved plates illustrating over 600 life-size medical instruments. Jean Louis Petit's *Traite Des Maladies Chirurgicales et Des Operations Qui Leur Convennent* (new edition, Paris, 1790) is a three-volume set with ninety folding copperplate engravings of early surgical instruments. And lastly, a sixth edition of Lorenz Heister's, *A General System of Surgery in Three Parts* (London, 1757), was received.

A number of rare books were purchased with funds from the University Libraries' Morris S. Saffron Book Endowment. *The Family Adviser; Calculated to Teach the Principles of Botany. Compiled with a Strict Regard to Logic Containing Directions for Preserving Health and Curing Diseases. For the Use of Families and Private Individuals* (Rochester, 1828), is authored by Daniel J. Cobb. Cobb describes 113 medicinal plants and assigns them to one of twenty-six classes of botanic medicines, which were grouped by the effect they produced. Cobb's book is but one example of the genre known as "popular medicine," used by non-physicians to diagnose and self-administer botanicals in the treatment of disease.

Eighty-seven 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>- Century annual reports were acquired to augment reports already in the collection. The annual reports, from diverse institutions such as the New Jersey State Insane Asylum at Morristown (Greystone Park) to the New Jersey State Village for Epileptics in Skillman, document a wide range of health and social service agencies. Another purchase was Juan B. Lastres' *Historia De La Medicina Peruana* (1951), a three-volume Garrison-Morton title on Peruvian and South American cultural medicine. Arthur E. Sansom's book, *The Antiseptic System: A Treatise on Carbolic Acid and its Compound* (London, 1871) is an important work on antiseptics from the incunabula period of germ theory and antiseptic development.

These books and other resources in the history of medicine may be viewed at the University Libraries Special Collections. Please contact Lois Densky-Wolff for an appointment at [densky@umdnj.edu](mailto:densky@umdnj.edu).

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**MEMBERS' RESEARCH IN PROGRESS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Sam Alwitz, PhD	"A Social History of the New Jersey Board of Health: The Early Years, 1660–1900."
Peter W. Carmel, MD	Initial operations for the Chiari Malformations.
Francis P. Chinard, MD	Dupont de Nemours and Jefferson on medical education; Abigail Adams on health problems in New England as related in her letters.
David L. Cowen, LittD	A study of Pauli Andreae Parenti's 1761 work on <i>Dosium Tum Simplicia cum ad Composita... Index</i> .
Gerald Grob, PhD	Mental health policy in modern America; history of disease.
Sandra Moss, MD	Essex County (NJ) medicine in the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century; African American health & healthcare in New Jersey; Yellow Fever and human experimentation.
Karen Reeds, PhD	New Jersey medicine in colonial and Revolutionary war period; botanical illustration – medieval, Leonardo, Renaissance herbals, Linnaeus; New Jersey State Village for Epileptics.
Allen B. Weisse, MD	The coronary thrombosis controversy; Saul Jarcho, MD; Meyer Friedman, MD.
Richard P. Wedeen, MD	History of nephrology research in the V.A. hospital.

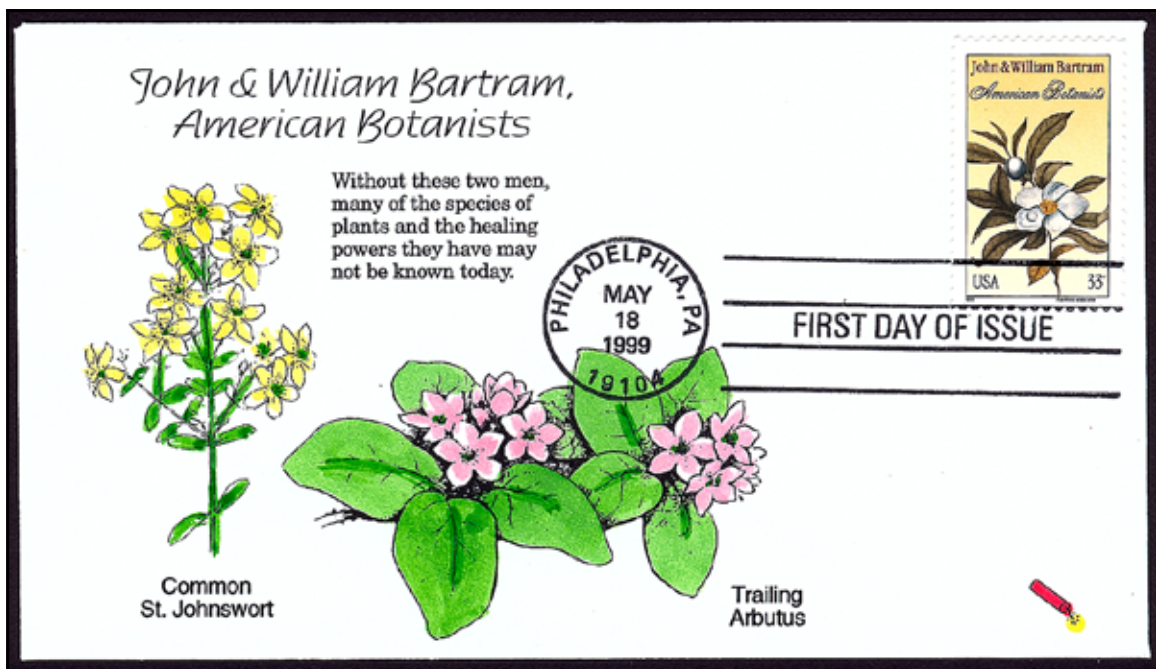
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The *Newsletter of the Medical History Society of New Jersey* is published in May and October by the Society, and is a benefit of membership. **Deadline for the next newsletter is April 1, 2004.** Short articles (250 words) on medical history topics are especially welcome. Please send correspondence and submissions to:

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United States—May 18, 1999



This first day cover for the John & William Bartram stamp depicts two plants that have been used in herbal medicine, but were not, to my knowledge, mentioned in Bartram's *Appendix*. The Common St. Johnswort (*Hypericum perforatum*) is a bitter, resinous and astringent herb and an alien species in the eastern United States. The trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), also known as the mayflower or ground laurel has been used as an astringent and diuretic, especially for bladder and urinary tract problems. It is the state flower of Massachusetts.

# Philatelic Sketches in Medicine

Frederick C. Skvara, M.D.

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John Bartram (1699-1777)

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On May 18, 1999 the USPS issued a 33-cent commemorative stamp honoring the father and son American botanists, John and William Bartram (1739–1823) who during their lifetimes were responsible for the majority of plant specimens shipped from the American colonies to the scientists of Europe. Considered the father of American botany, John Bartram was born in Darby, Pennsylvania and grew up with little formal education—choosing farming as his profession. Primarily self-taught through avid reading, he developed an interest in botany, beyond what was needed for his farming practices and was probably due, in part, to his interest in the herbal medicines that he used to treat his neighbors. Eventually this led to a published work on medical botany.



United States—May 18, 1999  
*Franklinia alata*

In 1728, John Bartram bought land in Kingsessing, Pennsylvania on the banks of the Schuylkill River, established his home and began a botanical garden which exists today as the Historic Bartram's Garden and which was the site of the first day ceremony for the stamp. He also began to explore the American colonies observing the natural history and collecting plant specimens. His travels and collecting soon became known in Europe and he eventually began corresponding with Peter Collinson, a wealthy London cloth merchant who also had a keen interest in botany. In exchange for plant material from Bartram, Collinson supplied money, recognition and books on natural history. Soon Bartram was supplying material for a number of European scientists including Carolus Linnaeus (known as Carl von Linné after he was granted nobility in 1761), the Swedish physician and botanist who developed the binomial system of nomenclature for the plant and animal kingdoms and who described John Bartram as “the greatest natural botanist in the world”. Peter Kalm, a student of Linnaeus, travelled throughout the Delaware Valley observing the natural history and meeting with John Bartram. Kalm's report so impressed Linnaeus, that he named the American mountain laurel shrub (*Kalmia latifolia*) in his student's honor. This shrub has been adopted as the state flower of Pennsylvania and Connecticut and can be seen on their stamps from the 1982 set of 50 stamps showing state birds and flowers.

In 1765, John Bartram was appointed American colonial botanist to King George III of England and since Florida had come under English control in 1763, Bartram could now undertake an expedition to the Floridas with his son William—a botanist in his own right and a gifted artist. It was during this trip that the Bartrams discovered the *Franklinia alata* tree growing on the banks of the Alatamaha river in southern Georgia. It was one of William Bartram's drawings of this shrub that was used to illustrate the stamp. The name of the plant was chosen to honor both Benjamin Franklin, a friend of John Bartram, and the river where it was found.



German Democratic Republic  
June 19, 1958  
Carl von Linné (1707–1778)  
Bicent. of Linnaeus' classification system

United States  
April 14, 1982  
State Birds & Flowers  
Connecticut  
Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)  
Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)



United States—June 1, 1976  
Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) &  
Map of North America—1776