



The Oslerian

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Getting Rid of Borders

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42d Annual AOS Mtg
in Chapel Hill, NC



Michael Bliss, 42d President of the AOS, installed at the 2011 meeting of the Society at Penn's Landing, Philadelphia

Pg Excitement mounts. As you'll
2 read elsewhere in this issue, every-
3 thing is in place now for our Chapel
 Hill meeting in April, bound to be the
 best ever. Thanks in advance to our
 Local Arrangements Committee,
4 chaired by Mike Jones, and to the
 tireless efforts of Sandra Moss and
 the Program Committee to present
5 an outstanding line-up of presenta-
 tions. As I write this in Toronto in
 the dead of winter, North Carolina
6 looks really, really good.

I'm sure the Blisses will find time for some local tourism, including the Civil War sites that seem to be everywhere whenever we go south in the U.S. But here in Canada in 2012 we're beginning our bi-centennial commemorations of an earlier North American civil war, the War of 1812. It was formally fought between the United States and Great Britain, but was really a conflict between North Americans about the future of the continent. Except for the oddity of the Battle of New Orleans (doubly odd in that it took place after the war had formally ended), most of the fighting took place along the northern border, as rag-tag American armies were repeatedly stymied in their attempts to

conquer the remains of British North America

The fighting ended in stalemate. Americans had devastated the capital of Upper Canada (York, now Toronto), and the British Navy had sacked Washington, burning the White House. The failure to capture a fort near Baltimore gave the United States "The Star-Spangled Banner", and the survival of Canada itself has given us up here the makings of a national mythology. Laura Secord was our Paul Revere, Sir Isaac Brock our General Washington, and for an earlier generation "The Maple Leaf Forever" was a national song:

At Queenston Heights and Lundy's Lane,

Our brave fathers, side by side,
 For freedom, homes and loved
 ones dear,
 Firmly stood and nobly died
 The Maple Leaf, our emblem
 dear,
 The Maple Leaf forever!
 God save our Queen and Heaven
 bless
 The Maple Leaf forever!

Please continue on Pg 2 →

President's Message (Continued from Pg 1)

The good news is that Canada and the US have lived in harmony ever since, with fighting limited to hockey games. It's perhaps wrong after 9/11 to say that the border is undefended or porous, but as most of us know it's not a very forbidding boundary. We fellow "Americans" go back and forth constantly and easily. Our American Osler Society of course always included Canada. How could it not, given Osler's own Canadian birth, education, and attachments to McGill and Toronto?

Osler never took the Canada-US border particularly seriously. He was very much of the generation of trans-Atlantic British descendents who believed it was unfortunate that the unity of the English-speaking peoples had ever been disrupted, especially by that most tragic of all civil wars, the American rebellion. In Osler's world there were two great highways: east and west across the Atlantic to the Old Country, north and south between the urban centres of the New World. Together, the countries formed a kind of North Atlantic triangle, the brightest points in which were London, Baltimore, Montreal, Philadelphia, Oxford, Toronto, and the village of Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The formal borders were mostly meaningless.

Over the years Canadian medics have seldom paid much attention to the border. I won't repeat here the talk I sometimes give on Osler and the Canadian takeover of American medicine; most everyone in the Osler Society surely knows how ubiquitous Canadian researchers, practitioners, students, nurses, and others have been in U.S. health care. As I mention in the biography, Osler himself worried enough about being accused of Canadian chauvinism at Hopkins to once tell an inquirer that he was a native of far northern New York.

We do try hard in Canada to make the medical border a bit more meaningful, in the sense that we want to keep our Oslers at home. (We also made the health care border startlingly meaningful after 1968 with our system of universal health insurance, but that's another

story.) In Osler's day, Canada always wanted him back. The University of Toronto perhaps came closest in 1906 when it invited him to become its president. Alas, Osler had just moved on to an even better job as Regius professor at Oxford.

These days you can count on Canadian universities and granting agencies to work very hard to bring back the bright Canadian men and women working in U.S. labs – and we even manage occasionally to poach some of your own best and brightest. At Toronto a few years ago we succeeded in keeping one of our modern Oslers – David Naylor, a great epidemiologist and our Dean of Medicine – by taking a leaf from a century earlier and promoting him to president. About the same time we sent off our Dean of Law – Ron Daniels – to take first the University of Pennsylvania and then Johns Hopkins in hand. Sorry, but your constitution doesn't allow us to give you a good Republican candidate this year – we think there are quite a few Canadians who would be competitive in that field! I don't think his talk is going to be political, but I am thrilled, as I know you are, that Doctor David Naylor, president of the University of Toronto and a genuine follower in Osler's footsteps, is to be our McGovern Lecturer in Chapel Hill, 2012.

As you know, Osler went out of his way to condemn chauvinism in medicine, and make clear that he was at home everywhere. He went further than that in arguing that medicine itself is a singular profession in the way that it transcends all national boundaries and barriers in ministering to all of humanity. I won't say more on this theme now because it is to be the jumping-off point for my presidential address at our banquet on April 24. At that time I'll also be handing over the office, and the latch-key, to Sandra Moss, nominally a citizen of the great state of New Jersey, but clearly Canadian by birth and temperament. It's been one of the great privileges in my life to have found my way to the American Osler Society and to have been honored with a term as president.

Thanks.

Michael Bliss

m.bliss@sympatico.ca

(Continued in next column)



Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan in 1888



Helen Keller and Mark Twain in 1896

her page is electric with light. Has Miss Sullivan taught her by the methods of India and the American public school? No, oh, no; for then she would be deafer and dumber and blinder than she was before. It is a pity that we can't educate all the children in the asylums." Mark Twain – *Following the Equator: A Journey around the World* [1897]

[Perhaps you saw the stage or film production of *The Miracle Worker*, starring Patty Duke as Helen Keller and Anne Bancroft as Anne Sullivan. Bancroft won a Toni Award for the Broadway production and an Oscar for the film. In the movie the nine-minute dining room battle scene required three cameras and took five days to capture on film.]

Quote of the Issue Anne Sullivan (1866–1936)

"I never taught language for the purpose of teaching it; but invariably used language as a medium for the communication of thought; thus learning of language was coincident with the acquisition of knowledge."

Sullivan, Keller, and Twain

Born on April 14, 1866, **Anne Sullivan** contracted trachoma at age five and underwent several operations to improve her failing vision. She attended the Perkins School for the Blind where she graduated as class valedictorian in 1886. A founder of the School, Franklin Benjamin Sanborn, encouraged her to teach another bright student, Helen Keller, for whom Sullivan acted as governess and teacher.

Helen Keller (1880–1968) was not born blind and deaf; at age 19 months, she contracted an illness, perhaps scarlet fever or meningitis, that left her deaf and blind. At age eight, Helen's father, on the recommendation of Alexander Graham Bell, enrolled her in the Perkins School for the Blind.

"Helen Keller has been dumb, stone deaf, and stone blind, ever since she was a little baby a year-and-a-half old; and now at sixteen years of age this miraculous creature, this wonder of all the ages, passes the Harvard University examination in Latin, German, French history, *belles lettres*, and such things, and does it brilliantly, too, not in a commonplace fashion. She doesn't know merely *things*, she is splendidly familiar with the *meanings* of them. When she writes an essay on a Shakespearean character, her English is fine and strong, her grasp of the subject is the grasp of one who knows, and



AOS
SECRETARY
PAUL MUELLER
WHO HAS SERVED
FULLY AND FAITHFULLY
SENDS THIS LETTER
TO THE AOS
MEMBERSHIP:



15 January 2012

Dear AOS Friends:

The 2012 annual meeting of the American Osler Society (AOS) marks the end of my term as AOS Secretary. Because of increased responsibilities at Mayo Clinic, I will not be seeking a second term. Nevertheless, I trust AOS Nominating Committee and Board of governors (BOG) will identify a suitable and effective candidate for you to consider and confirm as the new Secretary.

I have enjoyed my leadership role with the AOS and working with all of you. I am proud of our accomplishments during the past 3 years including the "flattening" of our leadership structure, which resulted in more individuals involved in Society-related decision making and activities (e.g., the appointment of an *Oslerian* editor, local arrangement committees for annual meetings, more involvement of AOS committees, etc.), a completely revised Web site with enhanced content (e.g., ability to pay dues online), a Facebook presence, revised bylaws and, most of all, hiring Renee Ziemer as the AOS administrator.

Nevertheless, it is time for me to move on and allow another AOS member the opportunity to serve as AOS Secretary. I am confident the Society has a bright and exciting future as we endeavor to memorialize and perpetuate the just and charitable life and ethical example of Sir William Osler.

Sincerely yours,

Paul S. Mueller, M.D.

mueller.pauls@mayo.edu

OF INTEREST TO OSLERIANS!**A SPECIAL TOUR: October 5-14, 2012****Museums of London: Art, History and Medicine**

Please consider joining **Catherine Scallen**, Chair of the Art History department and **Jim Edmonson**, Curator of the Dittrick Museum of Case Western Reserve University, for a custom designed tour of the key museums of London. Jim's contact with fellow curators and museum directors opens doors and provides the group with unique insights into their collections and aspects not normally open to the general public. Catherine's experience teaching and researching the masters of European Art from 1400 to 1900 will make the museum collections come alive. See full brochure with application information at:

<http://www.cwru.edu/artsci/dittrick/museum/PDFs/CWRU-Museums-London-2012.pdf>

CALL FOR ART EXHIBITERS!

In 2012 the AOS will again feature an art exhibit during the annual meeting. Oslerians are encouraged to share not only their intellectual prowess but also their artistic creativity in Chapel Hill.

So dust off those brushes and chisels, sharpen those needles and pixels! Many forms of art will be featured, including painting, photography, sculpture and other three-dimensional work, woodworking, needlework, collage and other media. Criteria for the exhibit include:

All submissions must represent original work by AOS members or their spouses. **Spouses and student members are especially encouraged to participate.**

Each artist may submit up to three works

All work must be ready for display, framed and mounted as appropriate

Maximum size is 24x30 inches, in order to fit the available exhibit space

Artists must submit a simple application form for each work shown.



Deadline for applications is March 8, 2012. Applications are available on the AOS Website, or by contacting Dr. Herbert Swick at hmswick@msn.com.

(An exhibit room has been reserved at Chapel Hill. While the AOS will make every effort to make this room secure, no insurance will be provided for any of the art work.)

A PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS AOS 2012 NC

Regarding the scientific sessions for the 42d Annual AOS Meeting:

53 Abstracts were accepted for presentations

2 Bean Contest Awardees will be presenting papers

The results of last year's survey about concurrent sessions:

49 folks were in favor

25 were against

(On that basis, due to the # of good abstracts, we are planning one half-day of concurrent sessions at the Chapel Hill meeting.)

AMERICAN OSLER SOCIETY

PRESIDENT: Michael Bliss
Toronto, ON, CANADA
m.bliss@sympatico.ca

SECRETARY: Paul Mueller
Mayo Clinic
200 First Street, SW
Rochester, MN 55905
TEL: 507/284-2585
mueller.pauls@mayo.edu

TREASURER: Dennis Bastron
Tucson, AZ
rdbastron@comcast.net

The Oslerian EDITOR:
Joseph B. VanderVeer, Jr.
10 Sugar Knoll Drive
Devon, PA 19333
joebv2@live.com



Aequanimitas

The AMERICAN OSLER SOCIETY exists to bring together members of the medical and allied professions, who by common inspiration are dedicated to memorialize and perpetuate the just and charitable life, the intellectual resourcefulness, and the ethical example of Sir William Osler, who lived from 1849 to 1919. Its OSLERIAN is published quarterly.

We're on the Web!
√ us out at:
www.americanosler.org

SOME OTHER THINGS TO DO IN CHAPEL HILL, NC

(See web sites for details of location and hours of operation)

Ackland Art Museum (www.ackland.org) This academic unit of UNC, situated across from the Carolina Inn, contains a splendid permanent collection of over 16,000 works.

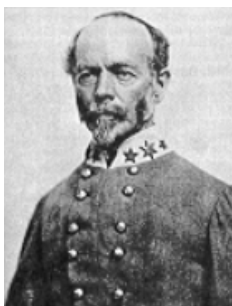
Charles Kuralt Learning Center (<http://jomc.unc.edu>) houses the contents of Kuralt's CBS News office, donated by his widow to the UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication. The center includes everything from Oriental rugs, bookshelves, and fireplace to his audio tapes and awards.

UNC Basketball Museum (www.tarheelblue.cstv.com/museum) This museum honors the rich tradition of Carolina Basketball through interactive displays, memorabilia collections, uniforms, game paraphernalia, photos, etc.

NC Botanical Garden (www.ncbg.unc.edu) With nearly 800 acres of nature trails, carnivorous plants, an aquatic plant collections, native plants, herb gardens, and outdoor sculpture, the North Carolina Botanical Garden is one of the largest of its kind. Visitors enjoy free guided tours of the display gardens and Education Center.

Duke Homestead and Tobacco Museum (www.ibiblio.org/dukehome) Visit this historic 1852 homestead where Washington Duke grew and processed tobacco, and enjoy a guided tour of the home, factories, and farm, watch an orientation film and peruse the onsite tobacco museum.

A Southern Season (<http://www.southernseason.com>) opened shop in 1975 as a tiny coffee roaster in Chapel Hill, NC. It has since grown in area and reputation: A NY Times critic called it "wall to wall and floor to ceiling, a visual and gustatory delight." Today, A Southern Season now houses one of the largest gourmet specialty stores in the U.S.



**AND
FOR
ALL
YOU
CIVIL WAR
BUFFS:**



Bennett Place (www.nchistoricsites.org/bennett) [4409 Bennett Memorial Rd., Durham NC] In this simple farmhouse in April 1865 Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston and Union Gen. William T. Sherman met and signed surrender papers for Southern armies in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. It was the largest troop surrender of the American Civil War.

AOS Members — Please forward to the editor information worth sharing with one another for OSLERIANS IN THE NEWS column, including awards and publications for yourself or other Oslerians. - JBV