

# Editor's Introduction

by Lucas Richert

THIS issue of *Pharmacy in History* is dedicated to the memory of Professor Glenn Sonnedecker, who died on June 26, 2021. A trained pharmacist and historian, he led the field from the 1950s to the late 1980s and was the founding editor of this journal in 1959. His was a pioneering mind, and he was a model of hard work. He was dedicated to the mission of advancing the knowledge of the history of pharmacy and medicines, both within the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy and the UW–Madison School of Pharmacy. Glenn was a regular source of conversation in the AIHP offices and that will not change. He will be missed.

In another way, this issue marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of another. Over the past sixty-odd years, since 1959, AIHP's journal of record has self-published. Glenn Sonnedecker, followed by John Parascandola, John Scarborough, and then Greg Higby, produced *PH* in house. That practice, however, concludes here. From 2021, the journal, newly renamed *History of Pharmacy and Pharmaceuticals*, will be published in partnership with the University of Wisconsin Press. One chapter closes, another opens.

This final issue of *Pharmacy in History* is filled with rich and diverse content. Indeed, it exemplifies the broad history of pharmacy and pharmaceuticals tent. A variety of geographical locations, time periods, approaches, and languages are on show in these pages. Ranging widely from ancient India and the Arab world, to the Netherlands, to post-Soviet Eurasia, and North America, the stories in this *PH* are, overall, eclectic and fun, as well as poignant and commemorative. Readers will learn about insulin's history, which is familiar to many and certainly generates useful debates about pricing and availability in the American medical marketplace. Readers will also learn about snakestones and other exotic pharmaceuticals, as well as ancient Indian medicine, which are not well known at all, but remain eminently captivating topics. Not only that, these pages are multi-lingual, drawing on Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, German, Italian, Latin, Russian, Ukrainian, and other languages.

In "Insulin at 100," Katherine Badertscher and Christopher Rutty, take a recognizable and often repeated case study in medico-scientific history and, using documents from the Eli Lilly Corporate Archives, offer a perspective that underlines the university-industry collaboration and the nature of insulin "innovation" as opposed to "discovery." It is a fitting piece of scholarship to mark the one hundredth anniversary of insulin's discovery and challenges readers to contemplate the virtues of pharma companies—before there was a Big Pharma—in scaling up lab-based discoveries to mass produce medicines for wider public health purposes.

Rachael Pymm, meanwhile, narrates a history of, and debate around, snakestones as a way of better understanding the Royal Society's mediation of scientific and medical knowledge in the seventeenth century, as well the boundary of pharmaceutical *exotica*. The article's narrative traverses Indonesia, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, and its characters are richly and wittily drawn. Pymm, to her credit, injects the theoretical concept of "weak ties" into her analysis, which forces consideration of how exactly medico-scientific knowledge was transmitted in the 1600s.

Turning eastward, Katarzyna Jarosz places a spotlight on under-researched and in some cases unknown pharmacy museums based in former Soviet countries. Her approach is not narrative; instead, she recounts valuable information about the interiority of pharmacy museums in the Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan. In doing so, Jarosz helps identify gaps and future areas of research in the history of pharmacy and pharmaceuticals. One can only look forward to novel and archivally-based histories of pharmacy and pharmaceuticals from the countries she examines.

Finally, Oliver Kahl, in translating eleven fragments of an Ayurvedic text from Arabic to English (for the first time), reveals the gendered nature of medical and pharmaceutical knowledge. This article, which harkens back to many similar and earlier publications in the pages of *Pharmacy in History*, is a meticulous piece of scholarship that relies on fluency in several languages and disciplines, including archaeology, classics, and pharmaceutical history.

The concluding sections of this journal include a robust review essay by Sarah Schneewind, the recurring Conversations feature, which centers on an informative interview with pharmaceutical historian David Herzberg, and Visual Pharmacy's focus on Plastod in Italy. Again, the material here is topically and geographically diverse, a quality we at *PH* are proud of.

To close this issue of *Pharmacy in History* and to honor Glenn Sonnedecker, the final section is a memorial to him—and from those who knew him well. Dave Cowen's 1973 article, "Glenn Sonnedecker as Historian," is a glorious tribute to his accomplishments and leadership. Ernst Stieb's 1977 AIHP Presidential Address reflects on Sonnedecker in a personal and often funny way. "I Remember When. . ." goes behind the curtain and illustrates the human side of not just Glenn, but other notable figures in the history of AIHP. Lastly, Holger Goetzendorff's review of Sonnedecker's publication list, which includes a brief biography, will act as a useful resource for others and also exemplifies the sheer heft of Glenn's academic contributions over the years. He was a leader, to be sure, but he was also a prolific writer and scholar.

In gathering, reviewing, editing, and formatting the materials for this final issue, it was enjoyable to occasionally reflect on the venerable history of AIHP's journal. This reflection was heightened even further with Glenn's death in late June as the production and layouts were being finalized. Thank you to all the editors, especially Greg Bond, and other staff at the Institute. I appreciate that former editor John Parascandola took the time to write up a reflection on *PH*. Gratitude must also be extended to the AIHP's Board of Directors. Most importantly, and as I have expressed before, the journal's peer reviewers must be singled out and celebrated for the service that they provide.

With this last issue of *Pharmacy in History*, it's fitting to end with one of George Urdang's principles. A co-founder of AIHP and intellectual leader in the history of pharmacy, as well as someone who understood new beginnings all too well, he argued that Institute activities ought to strive to make "the historical record of world civilization as complete as possible." While the name *Pharmacy in History* ends here, the struggle to meet Urdang's idealism continues its evolution.