“Virtual” Program for AVMHS 2020

Program Chair/President-Elect Dr. Zhigniew Wojcinski is delighted to announce the following plans as an alternative to the in-person AVMHS program intended for San Diego this summer: “The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all of us in different ways and has resulted in the cancellation of numerous conferences, including the AVMA meeting in July. This has had significant impact on our plans for the annual AVMHS meeting which is typically held in conjunction with the AVMA convention and was to be held at the San Diego Zoo this year. As such, we have had to rethink our options for our annual meeting.”

“To that end, we are planning to hold a “virtual” AVMHS annual meeting as an internet videoconference on July 31, 2020 at 11:00 AM PCT (2:00 PM EDT) via ZOOM Video Conferencing. Details regarding downloading and using the ‘free’ Zoom platform will be provided in an email invitation in the coming weeks. The Zoom platform was selected for its ease of use and connectivity. The moderator of the meeting will assist with any technical issues that you may encounter.”

“Dr. Meg Sutherland-Smith from the San Diego Zoo (SDZ) has agreed to give a 1-hour presentation on the history of the San Diego Zoo from a veterinary perspective at our annual meeting.”

“The AVMHS business meeting will follow Dr. Sutherland-Smith’s presentation. Hopefully, this will also entice AVMHS members to attend our business meeting as input from all members is key to the function and growth of our Society.”

The SDZ has kindly provided a 1932 photo of Dr. Charles Schroeder, their first veterinarian, shown treating a dromedary for the front of this year’s postcard. Copies will be mailed to members soon.

Dr. Charles Schroeder (above) was hired as zoo veterinarian and research scientist in 1932 and made a “remarkable difference.” He was one of the first to initiate detailed necropsies, emphasize hygiene, and thoroughly study animal physiology and behavior. He later became San Diego Zoo Director.

About 3-5 days in advance of the meeting, members will receive an email “invitation” with instructions about how to connect and join the Zoom conference. The email will also include attachments with the Business Meeting agenda, 2019-2020 Minutes, brief Committee reports, and slate of 2020-2020 officers for election.

To join Dr. Sutherland-Smith’s presentation and the Business Meeting to follow, you will need a computer (with or without a built-in camera for others to see you), internet connection, a comfortable chair, and have downloaded the Zoom app program. If questions, please contact Dr. Wojcinski (zwojcinski@gmail.com) who will serve as Zoom host and moderator. Comments, etc, concerning business meeting topics should be addressed to President Jerry Owens (jerrythevet46@gmail.com) prior to the meeting.
As you may already know, the canceled in-person AVMA convention in San Diego has become a 3-day “virtual” event to be held on August 20-22, 2020. As reported earlier, 4 proposals for posters on historical topics had been submitted to the AVMA CE Program Committee for Poster and Hot Topic presentations. We do not yet know if the AVMA has plans for sharing those posters electronically during their virtual convention and online vendor exhibits in August. If not, our members’ history-related posters could be held over until next year in Minneapolis. The 4 topics submitted were:

- Ana Alcaraz (Western University of Health Sciences College of Veterinary Medicine), “History of Bezoars”
- Shannon Greeley, “Primates in the Early American Space Program - A Historical Timeline”
- Karen Hassan, “Fort Ord Station Veterinary Hospital: Living History in the Making”
- Jerry M. Owens, “Two Early Veterinary Schools in California from 1894-1918”

We will keep you apprised of any changes as more information becomes available about the posters.

**History Trivia Question**

In the past, when did the AVMA cancel or suspend an annual meeting; if so, why? See answer on pages 7-8.

- a) 1873-74
- b) 1913-14
- c) 1944-45
- d) None of the above
- e) All of the above

**2020 Student Essay Contest Results**

Contest Committee Chair Dr. Jessica Zeiger (jzeigervet@gmail.com) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2020 Smithcors Student Veterinary History Essay Contest, with prizes in honor and recognition of Dr. Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence.

Winners of this year’s contest are:

**First place, $1,200**

Anastasiya Missan, ’22 University of Prince Edward Island

*The Un-BEE-lievable History of Beekeeping.*

**Second place, $1,000**

Anna Adams, ’21 Purdue University

*For the Love of Bastet: A History of Cats in Ancient Egypt.*

**Third place, $800**

Polly Weldon, ’22 University of Florida

*Looking Across Species: How One Veterinarian Revolutionized the Field of Public Health and Made Government Agencies Eat Crow.*

**Fourth place, $500**

Jennifer Fan, ’21 Cornell University

*A Strange Bellwether: The Mysterious Incident of 6000 Sheep in the Desert.*

We wish to sincerely thank Drs. Pat Kennedy Arrington, Maryanne Ash, Cynthia Hoobler, and Linda Schlater for their dedication and effort in blindly reviewing and evaluating all of the 27 papers submitted this year. In addition, as an annual practice, Dr. Zeiger has sent a letter to each winners’ college’s Dean notifying them of their students’ accomplishment. And, according to tradition, the winning papers will be published in forthcoming issues of *Veterinary Heritage.*

We are also pleased that Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine has given special recognition to Anna Adams for her prize winning essay. Please see the nice news release at [https://www.purdue.edu/vet/news/purdue-veterinary-student-wins-prize-in-veterinary-history-essay-contest.php](https://www.purdue.edu/vet/news/purdue-veterinary-student-wins-prize-in-veterinary-history-essay-contest.php) We hope that other veterinary colleges will similarly acknowledge their outstanding students for their contribution to promoting veterinary history.

The Society continues to desire as many students to participate as possible, and even someday receive at least one submission from each school in the US, Canada and West Indies. Members with contacts at veterinary colleges are encouraged to reach out to prospective students who are interested in history to get the word out about the contest opportunity. Summer months, before classes resume in the fall, is an excellent time to begin thinking about a topic and even getting a head start researching it. Contact Dr. Zeiger with suggestions or questions, and for advice.

> With prize funding from the Donaldson Charitable Trust in honor of Dr. Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence, the Smithcors Essay Contest will be held again in 2021. The deadline for submission of manuscripts is Thursday, April 15, 2021.

> **Dr. Fred Born’s New Wisconsin Blog**

Charter member Dr. Fred J. Born (fjborn@att.net) has been busy creating a new internet-based resource using some amazing technology. He recently launched a blog intended to inform Wisconsin veterinarians on various topics, including the history of veterinary medicine.

He said, “One of the subjects that has been brought to my attention is that the WVMA has not posted any WVMA
member’s obituaries in the monthly WVMA Voice Newsletter for the past ten years, nor on the official web site (www.wvma.org). Starting with the obituary of Dr. Rene’ Carlson in March of last year, this site shall report all Wisconsin veterinarian’s obituaries from now on.”

Dr. Born invites colleagues, family, and friends to send him notices of deceased veterinarians so that he can notify others by posting them immediately. In many cases, he feels “we have lost contact with many of our friends and colleagues we have known and worked with over the years, yet that should not overshadow a well-deserved acknowledgement of all that they contributed to the profession.”

The obituary blog and much more veterinary historical content can be found on the Wisconsin Museum of Veterinary Medicine webpage and Dr. Born’s blog at https://wmvm333.blogspot.com/

Furthermore, Dr. Born encourages sending this URL to any veterinarian who might be interested in this concept. He has found the development of this new resource exciting and personally enriching and encourages everyone to join in.

**Dr. Erickson’s History Course Continues**

Over the years, many veterinary students at Kansas State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine have been fortunate in being able to take Dr. Howard H. Erickson’s veterinary history elective course each fall.

Dr. Erickson describes his teaching as follows:

“I have taught the ‘History of Veterinary Medicine’ elective for eleven years. In 2009, our College revised the curriculum to include a core curriculum plus electives. I was on the history committee for our centennial and helped Dr. Ronnie Elmore write our history book, A Century of Excellence in 2005; I thought I could put together an elective on veterinary history. I had 16 students in the fall semester of 2009; enrollment gradually increased to as many as 80 students. The number of students has decreased as faculty have offered more electives. Over the years, more than 400 students have taken the course.

**Topics covered in the course include:**

1. An introduction to include some of the literature in veterinary history.
2. A time line of veterinary history.
3. Horse-whims, teamboats, and treadwheels: the horse in agriculture, industry, and transportation.
4. History of public health: perspectives from the archives, abroad, and in our own backyard.
5. History of veterinary medicine at Kansas State University.
8. The Kansas City Veterinary College.
10. The Boston Veterinary Institute.
11. Veterinary medicine in China: past, present, and future.
12. The history of the AVMA.

Dr. Justin Kastner gives the lecture on public health; some of his education was in the UK and he also has an interest in trade as well. He often takes students to Europe in the summer to visit historic sites, such as old anatomical theatres. Dr. Jishu Shi gives the lecture on China; he is the director of our US/China program in animal health. Dr. Kimathi Choma, one of our African-American graduates, and Assistant Dean for Diversity in the College of Arts and Sciences, helps me with the lecture on African-American pioneers in veterinary medicine. Weekly assignments are completed using Canvas as an online instructional platform for most of the topics that total 50 points of the student’s grade.

Kansas State University encourages all faculty to include some diversity in each course and engage students. Each student is required to interview two of our faculty who have international backgrounds and write a short summary (about 250 words) about each interview. I provide the students a list of some 50 faculty in our College who are multicultural or have an international education. They also present the results in one of the last classes in the semester. This project counts for 50 points of their grade.
Each student is also required to write a paper or essay on some topic related to the history of veterinary medicine and prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the topic. They are encouraged to follow the guidelines for the J. Fred Smithcors Student Essay Contest and submit their work for the contest. I ask them to submit an outline with three figures, and three references by October 1 (50 points), a draft of their paper with figures and references by November 1 (50 points), and a final copy of their paper (50 points) and PowerPoint (100 points) by early December. In the past 10 years, some 20 students have been winners or received honorable mention in the Smithcors Veterinary Student History Essay Contest.”

Revealing Data: Dr. James Herrick and the 1918 Influenza Epidemic

Anyone interested in “flattening the curve” would enjoy reading the recent blog post to Circulating Now dated June 9, 2020. It is by guest blogger E. Thomas Ewing, PhD, Professor of History and Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Professor Ewing offers a comparison of health recommendations during the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918 and today.

He begins, “The term “flattening the curve” circulated widely in early 2020 to explain the important social distancing measures to control the spread of COVID-19. Did medical experts during the 1918 epidemic also understand the concept of “flattening the curve”? An article by the eminent physician, Dr. James Herrick in 1919, suggests that this strategy was part of the public health response to that historic epidemic....”


Report on the World Association of the History of Veterinary Medicine, 44th International Congress, South Africa

Dr. Susan D. Jones, Distinguished McKnight University Professor, Program in the History of Science and Technology, Dept. of Ecology, Evolution and Behavior at the University of Minnesota, has graciously submitted the following report for those of us who did not have the opportunity to travel to South Africa this past February.

Dr. Susan Jones attended the 44th International Congress of the World Association for the History of Veterinary Medicine (WAHVM) held 26-29 February 2020, just outside Pretoria, South Africa. The conference venue was a delightful country hotel and game reserve, The Farm Inn, and our stay there included sights and sounds of lions and many other African animals and birds. The old stone and thatched-roof buildings provided a comfortable and atmospheric location for the scientific program, which featured 25 presentations by delegates from ten nations. The themes included History of International Cooperation in Veterinary Medicine, and History of Tropical Veterinary Diseases.

The keynote speaker was Prof. Sandra Swart, who detailed the medical and cultural history of horses that were imported into South Africa by Europeans. The early mixed-breed “Cape pony” was slowly replaced by an emphasis on British purebred horses, (which benefitted elite racehorse breeders but not the common people). Swart demonstrated how concerns over “purity” in equine bloodlines echoed racial separation policies for Europeans and Africans.

Another highlight of the Congress was the presentation of the WAHVM Early Career Award, won this year by Nicole Welk-Joerger from the U.S.A. Nicole presented a fascinating history of the development of monensin, the bovine growth promoter. Nicole’s prize included travel expenses to the Congress and a financial award.

The Congress finished with a game drive (safari) and a visit to the South African Veterinary Institute at Onderstepoort. This Institute, which is over a century old, was the first of its kind on the continent of Africa. It is well-known as the home of a father of international veterinary research, Sir Arnold Theiler, and it has been the site of many important discoveries about bacterial, protozoal, and viral diseases. Today this Institute is South Africa’s hub of veterinary research activity.

All Congress participants learned a great deal and, just as important, strengthened our scholarly and personal ties as veterinary historians.

For more information:
Twitter: #WAHVM2020
Website: http://www.wahvm.co.uk

For submitting individual WAHVM memberships, see instructions at https://www.wahvm.co.uk/membership
Dr. Jones explains, “We are standing in front of the famous Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (OVI), founded by Sir Arnold Theiler. This is the ‘Main Building,’ which with its quadrangle of stables and laboratories was constructed in 1908. Many important research discoveries were made here; this Institute carried out research on rinderpest, sleeping sickness, African Horse Sickness, East Coast fever, and many other diseases of livestock (especially vector-borne diseases). Today, this campus is also the home of the only veterinary school in South Africa, the University of Pretoria Faculty of Veterinary Science (founded 1920).”

“Throughout its history, OVI has had many historical connections with the USA. Theiler had read Smith and Kilborne’s treatise on Texas Cattle Fever and adapted its findings to the diseases of South Africa (where it was difficult to keep European breeds of horses and cattle alive because they had no immunity to African diseases). In another connection with the United States, K.F. Meyer (the famous veterinary researcher from California) found his first job out of veterinary school with Theiler in 1909. Meyer picked up much of his knowledge about the ecology of vector-borne diseases while working at Onderstepoort (although he and Theiler did not like each other, so Meyer left after a year and moved to the US.)”

More about Thomas Bowhill and HH Curson
Following on about South Africa, AVMHS member Dr. Oliver Knesl (oliverknesl@yahoo.com) sent a note after reading the paper on the California Veterinary College in the June 2020 issue of Veterinary Heritage.

Dr. Knesl has written detailed biographies on the careers of both Thomas Bowhill and Herbert Henry Curson.

Copies can be obtained from Dr. Knesl or the AVMHS Secretary-Treasurer.

He writes: “I collect and research medals awarded to past military veterinarians and thought that you would enjoy a photograph of the medals awarded to Thomas Bowhill who served as the first Dean of University of California Veterinary Department. I am fortunate in having Bowhill’s medals in my collection and have attached a biography I wrote on him for Veterinary History (Vol. 14. No. 3).”

He had a fascinating career that saw him serve with the Colonial Forces in South Africa between 1877 and 1879. He served as a Trooper with two Colonial Units, namely Northern Border Horse and Prince Albert's Guard Volunteer Rifles and for his service was awarded the South Africa Medal 1877-79. This award was granted for operations against various local tribes between September 1877 and December 1879. It is generally referred to as the South Africa General Service Medal. It appears as if the War Office had no clear understanding of the different tribes, chiefs or territories involved in the various conflicts but eventually it was decided to issue a one clasp medal, with the clasp denoting the year or years during which a recipient was employed against a particular tribe. The complicated nature of the various qualification criteria meant that the clerks at the War Office never quite made sense of all the various campaigns and wrong clasps were issued. Bowhill was, in fact, issued with two South Africa General Service Medals, one with Clasp 1877-78 reflecting his service with Prince Albert’s Guard Volunteer rifles which would have included service during the Zulu War.
of 1879, immortalized by the actions at Isandhlwana and Rorkes Drift.

After qualifying as a veterinary surgeon [MRCVS (New Edinburgh)] in 1886 Bowhill made his way to California before returning to South Africa as a Civil Veterinary Surgeon attached to the Army Veterinary department during the Anglo Boer War of 1899 – 1902 during which he served as the Veterinary Officer attached to the 14th Hussars and also as a Veterinary Embarkation Officer, Cape Town. For his Boer War Service he was awarded the Queens South Africa Medal (with six clasps). During the First World War he reenlisted in the Army Veterinary service now called the Army Veterinary Corps serving with the Australian and Canadian Remount Commission and then as the Veterinary Officer at the Reserve Horse Transport Department, Park Royal, London.

For his Great War service he was awarded three campaign medals, namely the 1914-15 Star, British war Medal and Allied Victory Medal and was appointed to be a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the King’s Birthday Honors of 3rd June 1919. After the War he joined the Colonial Veterinary service and in 1921 he was employed as a veterinary officer in Kampala, Uganda before retiring to Durban South Africa where he died on September 1st, 1925 aged 68. Certainly a very full and interesting life!”

“I also very much enjoyed Annelise Radzin’s essay on “Trypanosoma brucei: The Parasite that Plagued a Continent” particularly her reference to Herbert Henry Curson whose medals I am also privileged to have in my collection. I have attached a biography on Curson from Veterinary History (Vol 12, No. 2) as well as a photograph of the medals he was awarded.

Curson also had a fascinating career graduating MRCVS on the 9th July 1914 having excelled as a student at the Royal Veterinary College, London, gaining 14 College Medals during his time there. After qualifying he returned to South Africa, joining the State Veterinary Department in the Western Cape in January 1915, serving as a Field Officer in Cape Town until March 1917 at which point he joined the InterColonial Veterinary Commission on Rinderpest in German East Africa. For his war services with the Commission he was awarded the British War Medal.

After the War he was employed as a Veterinary Research Officer in charge of vaccine production at the Ondersteepoort Veterinary Research Institute (O.V.L), near Pretoria, South Africa. He served as a Captain in the South African Veterinary corps During the Second World War. For his war services, Curson was awarded the Africa Service Medal and the British War Medal 1939 – 1945. As a long serving Civil Servant he was also awarded the Coronation Medals of 1937 and 1953 that were issued to commemorate these events.

Meeting and Event Calendar
2020
Jul 31 AVMHS 43rd “Virtual” Annual Business Meeting and Program
2021
April 15 Student History Essay Contest submission deadline
2022
TBA 45th Congress, World Association for the History of Veterinary Medicine

New AVMHS Members (as of July 1)
We are pleased to welcome:
John Alexander, DVM (Pullman, WA)
Alex Ardans, DVM (Davis, CA)
Norman F. Cheville, DVM (Ames, IA)
George T. Dalziel, DVM (Montgomery Village, MD)
Susan D. Jones, DVM, PhD (St. Paul, MN)
Mary Beth Leininger, DVM (Lawrence, KS)
Edward L. Menning, DVM (Columbus, OH)
David Scarfe, PhD, DVM (Bartlett, IL)

New Books


“This book reviews the recent advances in rabies research and rabies vaccine development. The reader is introduced to biology and pathology of the virus, causing agents and the history of rabies vaccination. The book presents regional rabies prophylaxis...
programs and discusses vaccination strategies for wildlife and humans. Further, innate immune response as well as antibody response to rabies are examined...."


**Answer to History Trivia Question**
The correct answer is e) All of the above.

**1873-74 (10th annual meeting)** -- About a decade after its founding in 1863, the United States Veterinary Medical Association (USVMA) failed to hold an annual meeting in 1873 because of a mistake on notices about the date of the meeting.


Interestingly, the 13th annual meeting during 1875-76 was held in New York on September 10, 1876, and reconvened 10 days later in Philadelphia on September 20, 1876.

**1913-14 -- The 51st AVMA convention was to be held at the Hotel Grunewald in New Orleans on December 28-31, 1914. In advance, there was lot of interest in the program with railroad travel plans specifically arranged (including a special train from New York) for what was anticipated to be high attendance for “something out of the common." However, it was “not feasible this winter.”

While the executive committee first suggested postponing the meeting, it was necessary to poll the entire membership. Results of a December 9 vote by members favored postponing the December meeting. “We regret exceedingly, as no doubt everyone does, that a postponement was necessary, as our editorial shows that we were all prepared to go; under the circumstances we feel that everyone should accept it gracefully.”

In particular, “…we are confronted with the realization that the veterinarians of sixteen states and those of the federal government are fighting a plague that threatens the live stock industry of our country; and while their desires are to attend the A.V.M.A. convention and visit romantic New Orleans, they are mindful of the fact that their first duty is to the suppression and control of [the severe] Foot and Mouth Disease [outbreak], and they uncomplainingly make the sacrifice and let their brothers in the non-infective states go on without them?...the thought of leaving all the federal men and state veterinarians... (...including the president [Dr. C.J. Marshall from Pennsylvania] ... and secretary of the association), being left behind, made the success of the meeting a serious question, and a postponement until after the great feat of destroying the monster that threatens our live stock interests was suggested.”


The next 52nd meeting was held in Oakland, California on August 30-September 2, 1915.

**1944-45 (62nd annual meeting)** – “The AVMA cancelled its 1945 general meeting to comply with a governmental request that all organizations do so to relieve transportation problems during World War II. However, the AVMA House of Representatives did hold a meeting in Chicago that was for “Executive and Legislative Sessions Only.”

Also, during the war years, the annual convention was not canceled in 1943, but “only 700 attendees met in St. Louis for general sessions with no entertainment or commercial displays because ‘section work was abolished to make way for the special problems of the war,’ “ according to JAVMA News. “Despite wartime
travel restrictions, attendance at the 1944 meeting in Chicago exceeded 1,500, including 998 veterinarians.”

Now, 2020 will also go into the history books as a notable date. Yet, the convention will still go on with virtual continuing education, group sessions, and exhibits taking place via website, videoconference, and interactive chat thanks to internet connections and computer-based technology. Those long-distance capabilities were not available in ages past.

Special thanks to AVMA’s Diane Fagen for verifying these meeting dates.


* * *

Send news, comments, and suggestions for the next News & Comment to: AVMHS Secretary-Treasurer Susanne Whitaker, 23 Wedgewood Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850-1064, phone 607-257-9248 or email skw2@cornell.edu or avmhs.info@gmail.com.

“The farther backward you look, the farther forward you are likely to see.”
Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Contents of Recent Veterinary History Journal Issues
Copies of articles may be obtained through interlibrary loan services provided by your local college or public library, or from the AVMHS Secretary-Treasurer if unavailable from other sources.

Recent Journal Articles & Chapters Related to the History of Veterinary Medicine


