Composite of various drawings of stethoscopes donated by M. Donald Blaufox, M.D.
“How’s the library doing?” I get that question all the time. My upbeat, honest answer is, “We’re doing very well, thank you!” That may seem counterintuitive in today’s challenging budgetary environment, but we have been able to leverage the dollars available to us – about $2.6 million in FY08 -- into lots of good things.

We’ve added new electronic resources, including all the journals published by the American Medical Association, Nature Publishing Group, and Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.

We’ve bought fascinating history of medicine books with book endowments:

We were able to fund attendance at conferences and continuing education courses for staff on topics such as evidence-based practice, the ILLiad International Conference, and WorldCat on the Web. Best of all, we were able to support in-position promotions for the whole staff, acknowledging the increased responsibilities they have all assumed as we saw a number retirements between July 2006 and April 2008. Most notably, Dzwinka Holian was promoted to Associate Director, and Kathleen Blazar was promoted to Assistant Director. The outstanding Cleveland Health Sciences Library staff is the real reason the library is doing so well!
We conclude a busy summer at the Dittrick and enter the academic year with a number of exciting recent developments and several noteworthy coming attractions. Our activities to report on include collecting, volunteering, and researching in the collections, and encompass coming lectures and celebrations, notably the Year of Darwin. We particularly look forward to seeing you at the Zverina and Handerson lectures.

**Blaufox gift of drawings of historic stethoscopes**

We are pleased to announce that M. Donald Blaufox, M.D., has donated to the Dittrick a remarkable collection of drawings of historic stethoscopes. Personally, I have been acquainted with Don for over twenty years and we share a passion for the study of medical and surgical instruments of the past. When not collecting medical antiques, Don chairs the Department of Nuclear Medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center in New York City. He is a former chairman of the American Board of Nuclear Medicine and is the Co-Editor of the *Seminars in Nuclear Medicine*, and the *Yearbook of Nuclear Medicine*. Don has published extensively on nuclear medicine, hypertension, and medical history, and his latest books include *Blood Pressure Measurement: An Illustrated History* (1998) and *An Ear to the Chest: The Evolution of the Stethoscope* (2002). He also chaired the Museum Artifacts Committee of the New York Academy of Medicine and donated countless hours to the organization and cataloging of the museum collection. In 1998 Don brought me to New York as a consultant to assess the Academy’s impressive artifact collection. Our collaboration thus goes back a while, and has been very rewarding and productive over time.

Don served the broader community of collectors by founding the Medical Collectors Association and editing its *Newsletter* (1984-2002), which functioned as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information. In the early years of the Association, membership grew to over seventy five and that number doubled in the ensuing decade. This growth encouraged more columns and features, as well as periodic meetings, held in various cities, where members gave papers, visited museums of medical interest, and sought out antique shops. In recent years attendance waned, membership in the Association declined, and Don finally concluded that the end was in sight. The whole collecting field had been materially transformed by the web, email, and eBay, he reasoned, and so the *Newsletter* concluded with its final issue in 2002. When I learned that Don was hanging up his editorial hat, I proposed that the Medical Museums Association post past *Newsletter* issues on its website (http://www.case.edu/affil/MeMA/collectnews.htm). This has been accomplished in able fashion by Laura Travis of the Dittrick Medical History Center. It is therefore our pleasure to see the MCA *Newsletter* live on, knowing that much worthwhile information resided therein.

With this history behind us, Don recently contacted me to discuss the disposition of some materials from his collection. Specifically, he had about 130 hand drawn images of historic stethoscopes, from Laennec’s original (1816) monaural stethoscope through binaural models in the 1920s. These drawings came from the estate of the surgeon Nolie Mumey, M.D. (1891-1984), and were given to Don by Mumey’s widow. Mumey was a prolific writer on western, and especially Colorado, history, and an avid student of medical history who published several limited edition medical biographies, including one on René Théophile Hyacinthe Laennec, inventor of the stethoscope. Mumey clearly intended to write a book on the history of the stethoscope featuring these images, but he never completed the work before his death in 1984.

Don decided to donate this unique collection to the Dittrick as a fitting complement to our extensive collection of stethoscopes and other instruments for auscultation. We will be scanning the images and adding them to our website in time. Additionally, Don’s gift will precipitate a refurbishing of our balcony display on the history of diagnostic instruments. That exhibit was installed in 1976 and is crying out for a freshening up. Much scholarship has been done on the role of instruments in the physician-patient relationship since the landmark study by Stanley Joel Reiser, *Medicine and the reign of technology* (1978). Of course, Don’s monograph in the history of the stethoscope makes an important contribution to this literature. The revamped and updated display will take into account the insights and perspective of three decades of fresh contributions to our understanding of the relationship of medicine and technology. We will keep you posted on our progress in making this happen.
Julian Kassen, museum volunteer, celebrates his 90th birthday

Those of our readers who happen by the Dittrick on any given Wednesday and Thursday will encounter Dr. Julian Kassen, or simply “Kass” to friends and acquaintances. He is normally busy in my office pursuing research for the rare book exhibits that are mounted periodically in the Cushing Reading Room on the second floor of the Allen. But if one simply saw Kass as a busy assistant curator, they'd be missing the point of his time spent with us. It’s all about learning and discovery, and sharing a sense of wonder that comes in the process. This is clearly evident in the broad genial smile that graces his visage. He’s having fun! Kass and I both learn a lot about our rare books in the process, and delight in the chance to share these insights about the collection. I can’t begin to count the times that he said to me, “Boy, I can’t believe how much I didn’t know about the medical past! It’s rich and enriching and fascinating.”

Kass found us by chance and we’re glad he did. Retired some years ago from a distinguished career as internist in Cleveland, he wanted to find a volunteer opportunity of value. Kass hoped to make a meaningful contribution and he certainly has. We each wear a number of hats at the Dittrick, and some fit better than others. It fell to my lot to learn more about our rare book collection in the last decade. I knew that we had an important collection, ranking in the top ten across the country. But crafting exhibitions to showcase this collection is time consuming, perhaps more so than I ever expected. I simply couldn’t do it on my own, and keep up with my other work. I needed a research assistant and Kass more than fit the bill. He has a sharp inquiring mind, matched by a wry wit, which makes for a great companion and collaborator. Together we have delved into some pretty amazing corners of the rare book collection. Past exhibits have ranged from the riches of the Corlett and Cole dermatology collections, to the equally amazing strengths of obstetrical and anatomical holdings. Most recently we have been concocting an exhibition of pre 1700 surgical works, and have found some amazing tomes in our care. We have come to appreciate that the founders of the CMLA had a firm grasp on the history of the medical calling. Some, notably Dudley Peter Allen and Henry E. Henderson, were avid medical historians in their own right. The Trustees of the CMLA also went to great lengths to assure that their library would present a comprehensive body of the great medical and science classics, from Vesalius’ Fabrica (the first book given to the fledgling CMLA by Johns Hopkins founder Howard A. Kelly in 1893) to Darwin’s Origin of Species (cornerstone to the Stecher Darwiniana collection).

Kass plays another role at the Dittrick that is not so evident but is much appreciated. He has become an unabashed booster, beating the Dittrick’s drum at every opportunity. The Dittrick is an academically inclined museum, serving the faculty and students of CWRU, as well as the members of the Cleveland Medical Library Association. Our mandate is to facilitate the use of our collections in teaching, research projects, and publicity for university programs. At the same time, we have a public museum open to one and all. Kass is determined to bring us to the attention of the greater Cleveland community and never forsakes an occasion to do so. We welcome and appreciate Kass’s enthusiastic boosterism and are prompted to go the extra mile at his urging.

Personally, there’s another bond that I share with Kass: we both embrace a passion for travel and the sense of discovery that accompanies foreign adventures. Beginning with medical service in France in the Second World War, Kass developed a touch of wanderlust, which he shared with his wife Aileen and children Michael and Melinda. Over the years they ventured abroad many times, from the Arctic Circle to Africa, and from Asia to the Americas. Kass has regaled the Dittrick staff with funny, charming tales from the road. He has genuinely enjoyed engaging people along the way, learning much from them during the course of his travels. For Kass, traveling made him a citizen of the world, better enabling him to stand in the shoes of others across our planet and appreciate their perspective on global issues. In this regard, he is an inspiration and a model of compassion and humanitarian concern. I can only hope that if I ever reach the ripe age of 90, I will have at least half the optimism and good cheer that Kass brings to the Dittrick each week.
Zverina Lecture to feature Wendy Kline speaking on *Our Bodies, Ourselves*

On Thursday Sept. 25 the Dittrick will offer the Anton and Rose Zverina Lecture featuring Wendy Kline, Ph.D. Professor Kline will present “Reproducing *Our Bodies, Ourselves*: birth control and the women’s health movement.” Her lecture focuses upon the impact that the book, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, has had upon women’s knowledge about and attitudes toward their bodies and birth control. From its first publication as a stapled newsprint booklet in 1970 to its latest Russian re-edition in 2007, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, a book about women’s health and sexuality, has grown in popularity and influence throughout North America and the world. It is produced by Our Bodies Ourselves, a non-profit organization formerly known as the Boston Women’s Health Book Collective.


This year’s Zverina Lecture is being offered in association with the Flora Stone Mather Center for Women as the culminating event of their Health and Wellness Fair on September 25th (11:30-1:30, Thwing Ballroom). For details, see the Center’s website: http://www.case.edu/provost/centerforwomen/index.html. The Zverina Lecture is free to the public and will be held in the Zverina Room, adjacent to the Dittrick Museum galleries on the third floor of the Allen Memorial Medical Library. The lecture begins at 6:00PM and is to be followed by a reception in the Dittrick Museum at 7:00PM, thus permitting our guests to see the Skuy Collection firsthand.

The Anton and Rose Zverina Lecture has been presented since 1979 with support of an endowment established by the Zverina family of Cleveland. The Zverina Endowment enables the Dittrick to bring a distinguished historian of medicine to the College of Arts and Sciences of CWRU, and to share their work with faculty, students, and friends of the Dittrick. Since the arrival of the Skuy Collection on the History of Contraception, we have strived to engage speakers whose scholarship touches upon the intersection of women, medicine, and contraception. We are especially pleased that Professor Kline’s topic addressed these issues so well, and look forward to seeing you on Sept. 25th.

Research at the Dittrick:

**Professor Caroline Acker investigates hypodermic instrumentation**

Dr. Caroline Acker is a historian whose research has focused on medical and scientific ideas about opiate addiction in the U.S. since about 1890. She teaches at Carnegie Mellon University and has published *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States, 1800-2000* (2004), *Creating the American Junkie: Addiction Research in the Classic Era of Narcotic Control* (2001), and numerous articles on addiction and the intersection between AIDS and drug policy. She is currently working on a book about the hypodermic syringe as a medical instrument from the 1850s to the present.

She wrote to explain her current research: “My main focus is on the people who used the instrument, what they saw as the risks associated with it, and how they tried to control or minimize those risks. Although the basic components of the syringe have not changed over the century and a half since its use became widespread among American physicians, its relationship to medical practice, medical knowledge, and professional identity have changed significantly. In the 19th century, physicians embedded their use of the syringe in debates about drug action and detailed discussions about how to use the instrument effectively. In the 20th century, as hypodermic injection became...
more routine, it became a task of nurses, who also performed the considerable work necessary to keep syringes sterile and needles sharp. The advent of the disposable syringe in the 1960s dramatically reduced the risks associated with the medical uses of the instrument and transformed the syringe into the mundane object of today. Meanwhile, from the late 1980s, AIDS activists found in the syringe an important tool of public health outreach as they developed needle exchange programs to reduce the spread of HIV among injection drug users.”

Investigating these manifold issues brought Professor Acker to the Dittrick in search of artifact evidence for her study. Dr. Acker found that first hand scrutiny of hypodermic syringes and associated paraphernalia, as well as archival findings, yielded important insights not readily apparent from printed sources. We will look forward to the results of this fascinating study in a forthcoming publication.

### Year of Darwin at CWRU and the Dittrick

This academic year marks a double anniversary for Charles Darwin: the 200th anniversary of his birth, on February 12th (and incidentally the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, and also of your Chief Curator, albeit not so many moons ago!), and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Origin of Species* (November 24, 1859). Departments from across the university will sponsor events and programs celebrating Charles Darwin’s life, his work and the diverse ways that evolutionary theory even today influences research and thought in biology and other fields. For a listing of events, dates, times, and venues, see the Year of Darwin website: http://www.case.edu/darwin/

The Dittrick is participating in this celebration by mounting an exhibition in collaboration with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History this fall, to be held at their site. We will be loaning several volumes from the Robert M. Stecher Collection of Darwiniana, bringing together texts with natural history specimens that illustrate principles and evidence set forth in *Origin* and other Darwin publications. We will also be loaning material to the Holden Arboretum relating to plant evidence for the mechanics of evolution for an exhibition to be held in the Rare Book Room, which houses print and art works primarily in the areas of botany, botanical voyages, herbals and horticulture, of the William H. Corning Library in Kirtland. For contacts and information, see their website: http://www.holdenarb.org/Learn/library.htm

AAHM planning ramps up at the Dittrick

The Dittrick is leading the planning for the 82nd annual meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine, to take place at the Intercontinental Hotel, April 23-26, 2009. Pat Gerstner is taking the lead on arrangements with the conference hotel, while the rest of the Dittrick staff is dividing up other logistical aspects, and in this we are supported by several CWRU faculty and staff. The CMLA will be supporting the Garrison Lecture and reception, to be held at the Allen Memorial Library on Thursday, April 23.

The Lakeside Unit in World War I

The Lakeside Unit, organized more than a year before the United States entered the war in 1917, provided medical care to Allied troops in France. Dr. George Crile, Chief of Surgery at Lakeside Hospital, drew on the hospital personnel to staff a surgical team to study medical conditions in France. The team was based for three months at the American Ambulance Hospital in Paris. In the summer of 1915, after Crile had returned to Cleveland, he outlined a plan for the organization and equipment of a base hospital should the US enter the war. In 1917 when the US did enter the war, the Lakeside Unit, now formally designated at Base Hospital No. 4, was ready for active duty overseas.

Through a cooperative effort between the Dittrick Medical History Center and the Stanley A. Ferguson Archives at the University Hospitals, original images and documents from both institutions holdings will be used in an online exhibit to document the history of the Lakeside Unit. If you have anything to share, please don’t hesitate to call Jennifer Nieves (Archivist/Museum Registrar, Dittrick Museum) at 216-368-3648. We are actively seeking materials that may help us in our research.
DATES TO REMEMBER

**September 17-21, 2008**  14th Congress of the European Association of Museums of the History of Medical Sciences, to be hosted by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Theme: *The Body: Simulacra and Simulation - models, prosthetics and interventions,*

**September 25, 2008**  Anton and Rose Zverina Lecture. Wendy Kline, Ph.D., University of Cincinnati, *Reproducing Our Bodies, Ourselves: birth control and the women’s health movement.* Dittrick Medical History Center, CWRU

**March 26, 2009**  Henderson Lecture. Simon Chaplin, Director of the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (London), *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hunter.* Dittrick Medical History Center, CWRU

**April 23-26, 2009**  American Association for the History of Medicine, 82nd annual meeting, Cleveland, Ohio.

**May 16, 2009**  Ohio Academy of Medical History, hosted by The Medical Heritage Center (OSU), Columbus, Ohio.