

# Indiana Medical History Museum

Quarterly  
Newsletter  
Winter 2013

## A Special Thank You

We greatly appreciate the generosity our members and donors have shown over the past year. Despite an economy that is still presenting challenges for all of us, your contributions have allowed the Indiana Medical History Museum to continue to serve the community as a cultural and educational institution dedicated to the heritage of the healing arts in Indiana. The Old Pathology Building, the 1895 historic site serving as home for the Indiana Medical History Museum, is one of Indiana's architectural gems, an outstanding teaching tool, and a powerful reminder of Indiana's leadership in medical heritage.



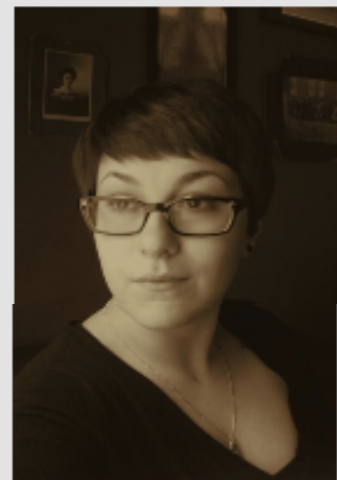
Seven Steeples in Winter, Women's Department of Central Indiana Hospital for the Insane

During the past twelve months, your donations have allowed more than 6,000 visitors to take docent-led tours of the Old Pathology Building, the IMHM Medicinal Plant Garden, and the Doctor's Office exhibit and attend many entertaining programs to learn about the history of medicine in the State of Indiana. Our goal is to serve an even greater audience in 2013!

We are proud of the museum's service as an educational venue for students at all levels, from grade school to university. Last year brought more than 3,000 pupils from more than 50 different schools state-wide. With your financial help, we were able to offer curriculum-relevant tours, presentations, and activities for these students.

**We know you have many choices as you plan your philanthropic gifts, and we would like to sincerely thank our members for choosing to contribute to the continuing success of the Indiana Medical History Museum.**

## Volunteer Spotlight: Grace Aichinger



Grace Aichinger, volunteer docent at IMHM

Grace Aichinger is a student at Indiana University studying history as well as the history and philosophy of science, concentrating on medical history and death and culture. She hopes to work in medical libraries or museums like the Mutter Museum in Philadelphia when she finishes her studies. Grace has been a volunteer at the Indiana Medical History Museum since 2009. We interviewed Grace about her volunteer experience here at IMHM, and here's what she said.

**How did you first hear about the museum? When you first visited, what were you expecting, and did it live up to those expectations?**

*Contributing to preserving Indiana and medical history is my passion! When I began studying history in college, I wanted to volunteer in a museum but couldn't find a place that truly suited me. I stumbled upon the website [for the Indiana Medical History Museum] and jumped right on the opportunity to apply. Visiting the IMHM for the first time was an experience beyond anything I had imagined. The aesthetic of the building, the intriguing nature of the 19th century medical sciences, the collection of specimens, autopsy records, laboratory tests, Victorian medical equipment...the list goes on!*

**Why did you decide to volunteer at the museum, and what would you like others to know about the volunteer experience here at IMHM?**

*I chose to volunteer at the museum, because it has a mission about which I feel very strong. Preserving history is so very important, not only to help us not forget the past, but to experience history in its original atmosphere. One cannot fully understand history without seeing its features live and in person...or dead in this case! Volunteering here gives me a feeling of accomplishment, of being a part of something important to our own history.*

**What is your favorite thing about the building or its collections? Do you have a favorite room or artifact? Why is it your favorite?**

*The IMHM is my favorite thing all around! If I had to choose, though, I'd say my favorite room is the histology lab. This room is interesting to me because of the many small features that helped dramatically improve the students' and pathologists' work experience. For example, the room's windows face north to maintain consistent light for the microscopes. This teaches us, in a way, how we take such everyday improvements [as the electric microscope] for granted. Fascinating!*

**What do you gain personally from your volunteer experience here? Would you recommend it to others?**

*I can say with complete confidence that the IMHM has changed my life. It has helped shape my career goals while keeping me passionate about history. Guiding tours has helped me improve my people skills and public speaking skills, as well as developed the way I perceive and understand history. I would certainly recommend the museum and volunteering to anyone with an interest in history, be it medical, public or otherwise. It is not often that one gets the opportunity to be inside such a fascinating and beautiful building, and to have the opportunity to share its history is an honor.*

## Favorites from the Collection



Bottle of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription tablets

This quarter's Favorite from the Collection was chosen by our Director of Public Programs, Sarah Halter. As it turns out, Sarah has many favorites from the collections, but she has chosen an object from the patent medicine collection to share with us now.

**Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription,**  
part of a donation made by Dr. Kenneth L. Gray in 2009

*The sometimes shady manufacturers of 19th century patent medicines really took people in with their dramatic advertising, miraculous claims, and exotic-sounding ingredients. During the golden age of patent medicines [between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I] these products, and advertisements for them, were everywhere, promising to cure every disease, discomfort, or bad habit that might plague someone. Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for women's complaints, Dr. Marshall's Catarrh Snuff, Dr. Boker's kidney pills to "cure all diseases of the kidneys, bladder, and urinary organs," Barry's Tricopherous to cure baldness, Dr. Haines' Golden Specific to cure drunkenness-- "NEVER FAILS!" Sounds great, doesn't it?*

*The problem was that many of them didn't work or worse, caused serious harm. Even those that seemed to work as promised did so with ingredients that could be very dangerous. These so-called medications were not regulated, often contained toxic ingredients that were not disclosed, did not list possible dangers on their labels or in ads, made vague or outrageous promises, could be contaminated with other harmful substances, and could be purchased by anyone over the counter. The problem was that many of them didn't work or worse, caused serious harm. Even those that seemed to work as promised did so with ingredients that could be very dangerous. These so-called medications were not regulated, often contained toxic ingredients that were not disclosed, did not list possible dangers on their labels or in ads, made vague or outrageous promises, could be contaminated with other harmful substances, and could be purchased by anyone over the counter.*

*In the early 1900s, muckraking journalists took on patent medicines as part of their broader campaigns for social improvement. They began publishing accounts of deaths and addictions, raising awareness about the dangers of patent medicines and inciting a public outcry that led to the passage of the federal Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906. Patent medicines were not banned by this act, but the laws helped by requiring accurate labeling with ingredients and ending some of the more outrageous claims made in the companies' advertising. It was a first step to protecting the public against harmful products and false advertisement.*

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription was one of the many immensely popular patent medicines of its time marketed specifically to women. It promised to cure nervousness, melancholy, irregular appetite, and hysteria of "the weaker sex." The 1895 advertisement below, from a private collection, is typical of patent medicine advertisements, with its flowery, yet vague, language and complete lack of disclosure regarding ingredients.

**A WOMANLY WOMAN**

IS there anything more wholesome, more beautiful, more completely pleasing than a womanly woman? Such a woman is even tempered, intelligent, strong and healthy. Health really tells the whole story. Health means strong nerves and strong body, and they go far toward bringing good looks and amiability.

A woman worn and weary by the dragging weakness peculiar to her sex, cannot be expected to find zest in any duty or amusement. Life is all one dead, monotonous gloom to her. On her face is written the story of weakness and pain. The wholesomeness of health is lacking. The cheeks lack fullness, the eyes lack sparkle, the hair lacks luster.

Doctors have learned to locate the source of nine-tenths of womanly sickness in the organs that ought above all others to be strong and healthy.

Sensitive women shudder at the thought of consulting a physician on such matters. A natural feeling of modesty makes them dread the examination, and subsequent local treatment on which most doctors insist. Much more often than not, this is unnecessary. It should not be submitted to except as a last resort.

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription has cured thousands of severe cases of "female weakness." It works in a natural, sensible way. It begins by subduing the inflammation that is always present. Then it strengthens and invigorates the whole body, particularly the organs distinctly feminine. It promotes regularity, cures inflammation and ulceration, and stops the debilitating drain caused by them.

**MOTHERS' RELIEF.**

WORLD'S DISPENSARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, Buffalo, N. Y.:  
*Testimonial*—Doctor Pierce's Medicines have been our family medicines for twenty years. They are all they have been represented to be, and untold benefits have been derived from them.

Have been treated by you with your Special Remedies and cured of difficulties that our family doctor failed to cure; and when aided by the use of a few bottles of "Golden Medical Discovery," have been always benefited.

I recommend Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription to every one who is having a family—taken as directed; in confinement it lessens pain, shortens "labor" and works like a charm. Respectfully,  
Mrs. A. D. SIMMONS,  
Emporia, Lyon Co., Kas.

**A COMPLICATED CASE**

Cured by "Favorite Prescription."

WORLD'S DISPENSARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, Buffalo, N. Y.:  
*Testimonial*—As to my case. It seems that everything ailed me that could befall a woman, but I derived the greatest benefit upon taking Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, and I take much pleasure in recommending it to all suffering women.

Most cordially,  
Mrs. EDITH THORNTON,  
Box 137, Dayton, Ohio Co., Tenn.

Mrs. THORNTON.