



The Museum is Open!

Executive Director's Message



By Bill Sandberg

Even the most casual visitor cannot leave the museum without a better appreciation for the history of medicine, medical advances and this Medical Society's proud history.

"Wow, this is really neat," commented a recent visitor to the new Sierra Sacramento Valley Museum of Medical History. "I need to come back and spend some time here!"

Comments like this are the norm since the Museum opened early in September after four months of construction and work by the members of the Society's Historical Committee.

The Museum replaces much of the Paul Guttman Medical Library and Information Center. The Library closed December 31, 1999, after more than 50 years of service to Society members and the public at large. When it made the difficult decision to close the Library, the Society's Board wanted to preserve the best of the Library's collection of texts, journals and artifacts.

It took 16 months to decide what to keep and to find homes for the books and journals not considered historically valuable. By the end of April 2001, homes had been found for 900 texts and 18,000 bound journals. The surplus from our collection went to our members, other medical libraries and numerous publishers. Selected journal titles from the 1950s back to the late 1800s were saved along with hundreds of rare texts dating back to the 1700s. We retained 900 feet of shelving for the most interesting journals and texts.

Construction began on May 1, and converted the Library's 2,200 square feet into two sections - 1,000 square feet for commercial lease space, and the remainder for the Museum and an office and storage area.

In addition to the books and journals, there are 16 display cases showcasing medical artifacts collected and donated to the Society over the years. They feature collections in the fields of surgery, clinical diagnosis, infectious disease, pharmacy, radiology, Chinese medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, and medical quackery. The museum has room to grow and we are giving thought to adding displays or exhibits of interest to elementary school children.

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We need to recognize Robert LaPerriere, MD, Chairman of the Historical Committee, for his dedication and leadership, as well as committee members who put in long hours preparing the artifacts and displays - R.W. Lippold, MD; Edward Mansour, MD; Joseph Masters, MD; Margaret Masters, MD; Glenn Millar, Sr., MD; Norman Schwilk, MD; Irma West, MD; and Pat Stanford, RN, PhD.

The Museum is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We encourage our members to

stop by and visit. Guided and interpretive tours are available on request.

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