Happy New Year to NEOHC friends and supporters. I am happy to report that 2016 has been another productive, successful year at the New England Osteopathic Heritage Center. The foundational work of collecting, preserving and indexing collections continues, and public outreach is at the heart of what we do.

Over the course of the past year, the NEOHC has been honored with several new gifts from D.O.s and their families, as well as former nurses and staff from osteopathic hospitals. Helen Hoyt generously donated materials documenting experiences she and her husband, Hadley Hoyt, D.O., had in the Osteopathic profession. Deanna Richardson donated materials documenting the Osteopathic Hospital of Maine, and Collette Bouchard donated materials from her late father, Laurence Bouchard, D.O. I would like to personally thank everyone who gave to the NEOHC this year. Each of these collections, as well as several others that were donated this year, will be carefully examined, rehoused in archival folders and boxes, and indexed so that researchers and the NEOHC staff will have easy access to the materials.

Two of the most exciting additions to the NEOHC collections this year were oral histories. Last year we decided to resurrect our dormant Oral History Project. The response was fantastic, and in the spring of 2016 I conducted interviews with William Kirmes, D.O., of Manchester, New Hampshire and David Patriquin, D.O., of West Dummerston, Vermont. The interviews were interesting and insightful. Each audio file and transcript will be preserved, and a version will be accessible made online in 2017.

Our public outreach projects have been particularly fruitful this year. Many of you stopped by and spoke with me at either the Maine Osteopathic Association meeting or the Regional Osteopathic Medical Education (ROME) conference this past summer. It was a pleasure speaking with old friends and making new friends as well. I also attended the American Association for the History of Medicine (AAHM) conference. At AAHM I was able to reach out to academics in the history of medicine and promote NEOHC and the history of osteopathy in general. Our travelling Osteopathic History kiosk program had a particularly successful 2016, travelling all over the region, including the Lakes Region General Hospital, Central Maine Medical Center and Manchester Memorial Hospital in Manchester, Connecticut. Here on UNE’s Biddeford Campus I installed a new exhibit celebrating the contributions of women to the osteopathic profession in New England.

2016 has been a successful year. I am looking forward to continuing these projects and beginning a few new ones in 2017. I will continue to seek out participants for the oral history project, create new exhibits and digitize more materials for our online repository, dune.une.edu/neohc. In the coming year the NEOHC will also be honoring the 100th anniversary of the passing of Andrew Taylor Still, founder of osteopathy, through a variety of events.

Thank you again to everyone who has supported our work throughout 2016. With your continued interest and input, NEOHC will continue to grow—preserving the history of osteopathic medicine and educating future D.O.s and the public.

Thank you,
Zachary Enright
NEOHC archivist
was denied privileges at hospitals, and had to go to Europe. Upon her return she accept her for clinical training, and she first woman to earn an M.D. degree in 1849, Elizabeth Blackwell became the schools for women opened in the U.S. In Between 1850 and 1890, 19 medical schools for women opened in the U.S. In 1848, Harriot K. Hunt became the first female medical school in the new world, the College of Philadelphia, opens for men only. The American School of Osteopathy opened in 1892 and became the first coeducational medical school. From its inception, Andrew Taylor Still, the founder of osteopathy, was dedicated to assuring that the school was open to both men and women. The 1901–1902 college catalogue stated, “Women are admitted on the same terms as men. It is a policy of the school that there shall be no distinction as to sex. All have the same opportunities and the same requirements.” Out of the 21 students in the first class at ASO, five were women. The ASO continued to be successful in attracting female students throughout the turn of the century, and well into the 20th century.

The influence of women D.O.s on the medical profession in New England has been profound. At every level, from private practice to creating hospitals, schools and professional organizations, women have led the way.

In 1897, Ada A. Achorn, an 1896 graduate of the Northern Institute of Osteopathy, moved with her husband to Boston, Massachusetts. The first osteopaths in Massachusetts, together they founded the Boston Institute of Osteopathy that same year. Achorn served as the second vice president of the AOA in 1907–1908. As the osteopathic profession spread, the need arose for professional organizations to advocate for state legislation regulating the osteopathic profession. In the state of Maine, the Maine Osteopathic Association was incorporated in 1912. Of the seven original applicants, five were women: Mayme K. Tuttle, D.O., Mary Warren Day, D.O., Sophronia T. Rosebrook, D.O., Florence A. Coney, D.O., and Elizar Wood Mansan, D.O. Along with Nora Brown, D.O., these women worked tirelessly to get an osteopathic law passed in Maine.


The effect of women on the osteopathic profession can be seen not only in the institutions they helped to create, but in their relationships as practitioners, leaders and educators. Among such women was Anne Wales, D.O. Wales practiced primarily in Rhode Island from 1927 until her retirement in 1981. Wales was the first woman to take and pass the Rhode Island Osteopathic Licensing Examination, and she led the successful campaign to establish the Osteopathic Hospital of Rhode Island in 1933, becoming its first chief of pediatrics. In 1952, she established a free osteopathic clinic for handicapped children and their siblings. Wales wrote articles and papers, edited volumes and lectured throughout the U.S. and Europe. She was so well regarded that long after her retirement she was often sought out by osteopaths to share her knowledge and experience. Another such leader was Joan Abar, D.O. In 1978, Abar became the first woman chief of staff at any hospital in Rhode Island when she earned the position at the Cranston General Hospital.

Today 40% of all practicing D.O.s are women (48% of those who have been practicing less than 10 years.) Female D.O.s are represented in every specialty and at every level of the osteopathic profession. Women under 45 represent 62% from 2010 to 2015.